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THE COUNTY PALATINE,  
And other Poems.



# THE COUNTY PALATINE,

And other Poems.

*SACRED AND SECULAR,  
ORIGINAL AND TRANSLATED.*

BY

G. S. HODGES, B.A.,

*Vicar of Coppenhall and Dunston.*

LONDON :  
HOULSTON & SONS, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

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UNWIN BROTHERS, PRINTERS BY WATER POWER.





## THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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**A** FEW of these Poems appeared ten years ago in a small volume which had only a private circulation, and is now almost out of print ; a few have been used in magazines and other publications. But most of the contents of this volume are now printed for the first time. Many of the Poems, however, are from ten to twenty years old, exceeding the long limit assigned by the Horatian canon,—

“ Nonumque premantur in annum  
Membranis intus positis.”

Some explanation seems to be required for including between the same covers pages so incongruous as the Poems which compose the Second Part and the translation of a fantastic Greek Comedy.

The latter was intended for separate publication, but

when Professor Kennedy's admirable version came out, it seemed to make any rival effort superfluous and presumptuous.

Perhaps I ought to have adopted the course so ruthlessly hinted in the conclusion of the passage already quoted from the "de Arte Poeticâ,"—

"delere licebit  
Quod non edideris."

True, I might have done this, but natural pity stayed my hand, and so, as a sort of compromise, "The Birds" were consigned to this safe but more obscure asylum.

Perhaps some of my friends may think that their pleasant warblings relieve a book somewhat in need of sunshine, and others less indulgent may mutter with Peisthetærus, *τοιὺ τὸ πρᾶγμα φορτίου δέϊται πτερῶν.*





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## DEDICATION.



**W**HAT records of the solemn Past,  
Invisible to stranger's eye,  
Embalmed between these covers lie :—  
Some twenty years from first to last :

Records of places long unseen,  
Of friends beloved, or lost or dead,  
Of vows too often seconded  
By efforts weak or issues mean.

For here sea breezes bleached a page,  
And there adheres the factory grime ;  
This verse was writ in youthful prime,  
And that in sober middle-age.

The bard who cannot hold his part  
    In loftiest themes, as he may list,  
    Is fain to be a plagiarist,  
And copy from his own full heart.

Some souls of high poetic tone  
    Can guide Imagination's car  
    Thro' glowing realms of thought, afar  
From joys and sorrows of their own.

Our Milton, king of men, reclined  
    In peace among primeval bowers,  
    And lived creation's sunniest hours,  
Nor knew that he was sad and blind.

But when some feebler soul would rise  
    Beyond the cloud that bounds its view,  
    To travel regions strange and new,  
And self is fading from its eyes :

Some glimpse of beauty, some bright word,  
    In contrast with its own poor crown  
    Of life so sullied, drags it down  
To self again, like fettered bird ;

Who, urged to sing by instinct strong,  
    Chirps only feeble plaints of pain,  
    Lamenting for the heavy chain  
That cripples every flight of song.



*DEDICATION.*

xiii

So, since too much in monotone  
I fear this harp of mine doth ring,  
Save when I touch a lighter string,  
Or echo fancies not my own,

I will not beg the great or wise  
Of this unsympathising age  
To grace a dedication page,  
Or turn a leaf with careless eyes.

But you who love me—I have five,  
Five darlings—wife and children four—  
Who when this hand can write no more  
(God grant it !) may be yet alive,

To you I dedicate my best,  
As I have always loved you well,  
And wish no better than to dwell  
In your dear hearts, when I shall rest.

So goes my book to stand or fall,  
My solace many nights and days ;  
But whether critics scorn or praise,  
No matter : it is past recall.



PART I.

**The County Palatine.**





## THE COUNTY PALATINE.

I.

### THE RED ROSE.

*γλυκὴ καὶ ποιῶντι πῆραν  
ἐν ἀκανθίαις ἀταρπῶις*

**S**OME nooks within the County Palatine  
Still redden with her cognizance, the Rose ;  
But here the south-west wind, abandoning  
His native gentleness, assumes the mask  
And blustering tones of wild Euroclydon ;  
And rioting among the garden-beds  
Makes playthings of our roses ere their prime.  
Or if maternal Summer, undisturbed  
By murd'rous blasts, be left awhile in peace  
To rear her nurselings, brooding o'er their sleep  
With smiles, and tears, and soft Æolian airs,  
That woo them to unclosetheir baby eyes,  
And laugh into her face : shortlived, alas,  
The climax of her bliss ; such frequent clouds  
Of black voluminous incense puffed and curled  
From Trade's capacious temples chimney-spired,

*THE COUNTY PALATINE.*

Are blown at random by the changeful wind,  
Which earthward borne, begrime fair Nature's face,  
And hide her flowery train in funeral gear ;  
As if she mourned the summer days of old,  
That showed the native blushes of her rose  
On garden bloom, and blooming maiden face  
Unsullied by the sooty hand of Trade.

For paler now, yet comely still, the cheeks  
That gleam among the whirling factory wheels  
From early morn till evening shadows fall.  
They mark with watchful eye the fleecy lengths  
Drawn out and wound upon the dizzy reels :  
And ever and anon as some mishap  
May snap the subtile thread, you see them flit  
Barefooted and alert, this side or that,  
With ready hand to seize and re-unite,  
By dext'rous twist, the severed filament.  
A not unhappy throng, with liberal wage  
To cheer a life of intermittent toil ;  
But how unlike in stature and in bloom  
Their sisters of the farm, inured to tread  
The upturned clods and quaff the morning air ;  
Daughters of Anak, towering above  
The puny mincing maidens of the towns ;  
As hardy as the teams they drive a-field ;  
As wholesome as the odour of their hay ;  
Possessing strength exceeding maidenhood ;  
Yet feminine withal, with graceful forms,  
Such as the sculptor covets, who would carve,  
Greater than human, Here's sumptuous charms ;  
And liberally dowered with nobler grace  
Of nature kindly, loving, womanly.

Ah, human hearts of teeming Lancashire,  
Your roses still are blooming everywhere,  
Red, rich, and fragrant ; in the factory,  
Upon the farm, and fathoms deep beneath.  
He who loves only things inanimate,  
And pines for odorous airs, and velvet lawn  
Medallioned with choice flowers, and stately trees,  
The conèd chestnut, and the balmy lime ;  
Whose ear fastidious must be satisfied  
By Philomela's líquid cadences  
And elegiac gurglings ; or the coo  
Of brooding doves among the distant woods,  
Stillter than silence ; who " is not ashamed  
To take a solid portion from the day,"  
And listen for the shrill cicada's whirr  
Now here, now there, supine in summer grass ;  
Would roam at eventide through dewy glades  
High over-arched with leaves and pendent bloom,  
And watch the stars that glitter through the roof  
Repeated in the soft phosphoric gleam  
That marks the glow-worm's tiny hermitage ;  
He finds no roses here, let him depart !  
For here the plaining nightingale is mute ;  
No merry grasshopper plays hide-and-seek  
Among the buttercups ; at eventide  
No glow-worm lights her sanctuary lamp.  
Let him depart, and spread his silken tent  
Where Summer lingers, and with partial hand  
Inverts her brimming Cornucopia.

But one whose heart is throbbing stroke for stroke  
Responsive to his fellows, who is bound  
By sympathetic bond of brotherhood

To all that's human ; who has skill to gaze  
Upon the homeward collier's sooty brow,  
And through the smut trace out the honest man ;  
And holds his sideway nod more eloquent  
Of true regard than southern courtesies  
Of bended knees, or ready hand upraised  
Mechanical to touch the obsequious brim ;  
Who hears a music in the harsher tones  
And Doric dialect of Northern men ;  
O why should he go hence to search elsewhere  
For nature's Roses ? Everywhere abounds  
For him the blood-red, wild, Lancastrian Rose,  
Well worth the gathering, though beset with thorns.







II.

RELIGION.

“FANATICUS ERROR.”

**R**ICH soil, deprived of tilth and wholesome  
seed,  
Strong in spontaneous receptivity,  
From passing breeze, and migratory bird  
Will gather to it's bosom waifs and strays,  
Each inly freighted with the latent power  
Of re-production—ay, a thousand-fold.  
For good things in this evil world of ours  
Are slow of increase : vile things thrive apace ;  
A fungus ripens in a single night,  
The perfect oak scarce in a hundred years.  
But, looking at that wild luxuriance  
And tangled undergrowth, the farmer smiles  
A sage far-seeing smile, like one who knows  
That constant toil and cunning husbandry  
May reap rich guerdon here, and many a field  
That wastes its innate energy on weeds,  
Patient of culture, may be taught to gild  
A waving harvest in the Autumn breeze.

So let it be ! For every sect has pitched  
 Its tabernacle in the midst of us,  
 And yearns with zealot eagerness to stretch  
 It's canvas wider. Hence the frequent cry,  
 "Lo here ! lo there !" from myriad brazen throats  
 Outrings the chime of quiet Sabbath bells,  
 And lures the simple artisan astray.  
 He, severing his cable from the ark,  
 And drifting o'er opinion's heaving sea,  
 Can find no stable footing whence to mete  
 The line that severs Truth from phantasy—  
 Eternal Heaven from the shifting deep.  
 For his untutored ear, content to take  
 A downright statement for a downright truth,  
 Nor sharpened to discern the genuine ring  
 Of sterling metal, holds Pretension's dross  
 For coinage stamped in Truth's imperial die :  
 So, going from Dan to Bethel, easy man,  
 He thinks all true alike and very good ;  
 Till being cajoled by mistress or by friend  
 He shifts his side, and thinks with equal cause  
 That all are false alike and very vile ;  
 Then lends his ear to whispered poisonings,  
 " A leperous distilment," more abhorred  
 Than that which made the elder Hamlet ghost,  
 And ruminating like the sage of old,  
 " Nought comes of nought, and nought to nought  
     returns."  
 Prodigious lucubrations of the brain,  
 He styles himself " free-thinker " when most bound  
 By soul-enslaving error, and blasphemes  
 The Truth he never knew. Unhappy man !  
 Ah, wherefore learnt he not from sponsor lips,

Or better still at Christian mother's knee,  
The meaning of the Credo he professed,  
Belief in One Church, Holy, Catholic ?  
She stands a leaguered city in the land ;  
And round about her foes extend their lures  
To take her children : not in Gospel net,  
For that restrained the fishes it enclosed,  
And haled them struggling to the mystic shore.  
But these, so loose and flexible their folds,  
Present slight check to sinful wanderings ;  
And souls entangled there own no constraint.  
Such sins as in the days of discipline  
Would separate the doer from the flock,  
Are lightly treated, if reprov'd at all,  
As venial slips that merit little blame  
Beyond a feeble shaking of the head,  
Relieved from overmuch austerity  
By the incipient glimmer of a smile :  
And he who grants indulgences to-day,  
Will claim them for his favourite vice ere long !  
'Tis thus a people's moral sense declines  
Upon a lower level ; thus the vile,  
Unawed by public reprobation, run  
To great excess of riot ; thus the weak  
Are hurried to their fall ; and men deride  
Good faith and women scoff at purity.  
"To sin is human : " to repent of sin  
Is Christian : but to name one's evil good,  
And justify the villainy, and walk  
With head erect and flaunt it in the face  
Of Virtue, unabashed—can only bear  
The name of the Progenitor of Lies.  
By whom comes such offence except by him

Who dares to sever, though for pious ends,  
 The faith of Christian from whatever things  
 Are pure and honest and of good report ;  
 And trembles to pronounce " a spade a spade " "  
 Lest fewer voices shout his Shibboleth ?  
 'Twere better far that ancient idols claimed  
 Their ghastly fee, than Christian men should link  
 The name they bear with lewdness or with wrong  
 Mezentian \* horror ! living chained to dead.

O Bride of Christ, arise ! for Thou alone  
 Hast Power from on high ; forsake the bed  
 Of sloth ; bind on thy sandals ; let thy feet  
 Be beautiful, twin messengers of peace ;  
 Unbar thy chamber doors ; oh, fling them wide,  
 And welcome all thy children, rich and poor,  
 With equal love, as all are loved by Him.  
 Nay, seek them, seek the lost in street and lane,  
 And thou shalt surely win them back again  
 To veneration for the Things of God,  
 And self-respect, and reverence for man.  
 Proclaim the Faith, delivered once for all,  
 Thy grand Deposit ; and confirm the word  
 With mighty signs and wonders in the land,  
 The virtue of thy Sacramental Dower,  
 Making rough smooth, and crooked places straight  
 And through the very mountain heart of pride  
 A highway for thy Meek and Lowly King.

\* See Virgil, *Æn.* viii. 485, &c.



III.

WORK.

“FERVET OPUS.”

**A**LL honour to the knightly hearts that dared  
Molest the monster Greed within his den,  
To rescue human souls and bodies kept  
In dungeon deep, like Samson in the mill,  
And doomed to grind, in darkness and despair,  
Dear life away. Armed with the magic lance  
Of Edict Parliamentary, and strong  
In justice and in mercy forth they rode,  
And summoned from the black Cimmerian pit  
A captive horde of women and of girls,  
To see the light and breathe the air of God :  
Else had they toiled till now beneath the earth,  
And, plunged in moral gloom “that might be felt,”  
Lost all the delicate blossom of their sex,  
And learnt no higher lesson than to add  
To woman’s craft the grossness of the man.

Of such past swinish trampling on the pearl  
Of womanhood a relic still remains,—  
Vivandière-like bands who ply their task  
In light of day, beside the pendent cage  
And iron-braided rope on whose frail length

A husband's or a brother's safety hangs :  
For these are clad in masculine attire,  
And imitate man's slouching stride, and purse  
Their lips in sibillations loud and clear ;  
Redeemed from utter manliness by skirt,  
Like hussar's jacket, more for sign than use,  
And trill of girlish laughter, dulcet sound,  
That manly lungs are powerless to produce.  
Ambiguous beings, riddles for the gaze  
Of passing stranger, harder to be solved  
Than Gnidian Gyges \* with his curls unbound.

But not from subterranean pit alone  
They set the helpless free, their challenge bold  
Reverberated through the Factory.  
It glittered nightly with a hundred lamps,  
Like fairy palace in Arabian tale ;  
Stately without, but hideous within ;  
For this was Mammon's Temple, where he slew  
By slow degrees in one fell sacrifice  
The mother and the child: where women drooped  
In fetid atmosphere and twelve hours' toil ;  
Prolonged, when craving richer offerings  
The cruel idol nodded on his throne,  
Till eyes grew dim, and brain and sinew failed ;  
Where little ones, ill-favoured and diseased,  
Of six and seven, but old beyond their years,  
Toiled while they could, then closed their weary lids,  
And found within a pitying Saviour's arms  
The rest denied them here. Accursed love  
Of gold, that drew from fragrant country air  
An eager multitude, content to cast

\* See Horace, Carm. ii. 5, v. 20 to the end.

Their souls and bodies, nor themselves alone,  
But, O unnatural horror ! their sweet babes  
Before the wheels of British Juggernaut !  
Sights such as these, they say, may still be seen  
At Gallic Lille, not now on English soil ;  
For champions of the people interposed  
To save them from the tyrant and themselves,  
Who striking down that despicable guard,  
“ Let be, and wrong will right itself some day,”  
O'erthrew the idol, purified the shrine,  
And checked by kind restraint of wholesome law  
These cruelties that blurred the fame of Trade.  
And now the child of tender age goes forth  
At early morn with satchel on his arm,  
And face aglow with happiness and health ;  
Then, school-hours over, mingles with a crowd  
Of equals, all intent on boisterous play,  
And shouts, an infant Stentor, in the streets.  
But not till age has knit the sturdy frame,  
And education kindled light within  
To look around with shrewd intelligence,  
And gather stores of knowledge through the eye,  
May children add their earnings to the wage  
That keeps the wolf from the paternal door ;  
Nor then by toil severe, or negligence  
Of culture, issuing in dreary dearth  
Of qualities that dignify mankind ;  
But o'er their lives from ten to thirteen years  
The school and factory claim alternate sway.  
Benevolent design ! Ah, can it be  
That parents, all unworthy of the name,  
Are vile enough, pressed by no urgent need,  
To lie before High Heaven, and to rob

Their helpless offspring of a natural right,  
 Confirmed by human law, and law divine ;  
 But rendered null and void by futile test  
 Of counted teeth, like horse's at a fair.  
 Hence tiny hands too oft anticipate  
 The days of toil, and earn a paltry wage  
 To slake a father's ever-growing lust  
 For vile potations, or a mother's thirst  
 To add a weekly tribute to the store  
 Unjustly hoarded, and unblest by God.  
 Shall all that patriots battled for and won  
 Be thus despised and trampled under foot,  
 By those for whom they fought, while they conspire  
 To cheat the child, who climbs upon their knee,  
 Of knowledge, freedom, health, and piety ?

Turn we to brighter scene. At close of day,  
 When the slow hand has journeyed half its round,\*  
 Or on the sixth, primæval Sabbath rest,  
 When twice since noon the clock has chimed the hour,  
 The giant piston ceases from its thud,  
 The thousand wheels are still, as olden bards  
 Fabled Ixion's wheel in Tartarus,†  
 When Orpheus touched his wonder-working lyre.  
 But these are stayed by no diviner sound  
 Than screeching whistle. Then through open doors  
 The crowd pours forth, and clanking clogs provoke  
 The stony pavement with their wooden soles.  
 In twos and threes they pass, each lass with head  
 Mantilla-veiled, and thus with quip and laugh  
 Beguile their homeward way to food and rest.

\* Since this was written, the hours of labour have again been shortened.

† See Virgil, *Georg.* iv. 484.





IV.

“PLAY.”

*Ἐρασμὴ Πέλεια  
πόθεν πόθεν πέτασσαι;*

**S**OME part of that quick spirit which, the Bard  
Of Avon tells us, dwelt in Anṭony,  
Has emigrated northward, and possessed  
“The lads” who work our cotton, silk, and  
coal.

Some quickly seek the summer cricket-ground,  
And plant the triple wickets face to face,  
Pacing with measured strides the interval.  
And soon, at signal given, the bowler runs,  
And, tracing through the air a rapid arc,  
Whirls shoulder-high the well-sewn crimson ball,  
Like stone propelled by Roman catapult :  
It strikes the sod, and thence by sudden shoot,  
Or leap bail-high, assails the guarded wood ;  
But not unmarked by patient adversary,  
Who foils by bat obliquely interposed  
The dangerous missile ; till at length with glee

His practised eye discerns an erring ball,  
Short-pitched, or bowled in wild hyperbole :  
With might and main he strikes the sounding orb :  
It skims the leaguered plain : with one consent  
The batsmen flash across from goal to goal :  
But if by chance he drives the ball mid-air,  
Describing there a parabolic curve,  
Some subtle foeman glides with palms upraised  
And intercepts it in its swift descent ;  
Uproarious shouting hails the bold success.  
With shouldered arms the vanquished seeks his tent  
And sad at heart unclasps the padded greaves.

Others meanwhile, averse to manly game,  
Produce from inner pouch, with crumpled plumes,  
A pigeon kidnapped from some distant cote  
To gratify a passion strong alike  
In Peer and Peasant, urging one to stake  
A thousand guineas on his Pegasus,  
The other, shillings five on racing bird.  
But how can I upbraid the Pitman rude  
For risking thus the coins for which he toiled  
At peril of his life, and ought to store  
For evil days, or slow decline of age ;  
Unless the lash of indignation first  
Assail the noble gamesters on "the Turf,"  
Who lead blind Fortune's band, a hope forlorn ?

I hold the pigeon equal to the horse  
In speed and beauty, and her natural flight  
Beyond the reach of jockey, whip, and spur,  
Surpassing his, as much as aëry realm,  
Uncramped by barrier, shows a nobler course

Than Epsom Down or royal Ascot Heath.  
 But while we speak, the pigeon, whirled aloft  
 And scared by sudden freedom, tries her wings,  
 Circling around in wild and aimless haste ;  
 Then poised awhile, and motionless as bird  
 On painted canvas, views the far-off scene :  
 Till guided by some instinct of a heart  
 Athirst for callow brood, or treasured hope  
 Of eggs unhatched, or comfortable mate,  
 She beats the yielding air with rapid wing,  
 And steers direct for home, now dimly seen  
 A lighter speck beneath the distant cloud,  
 Now seen no more : but still the gaping crowd,  
 With skyward faces shaded from the glare  
 By arching arm, survey the empty blue.  
 Thus, said the fable, stood the royal twins  
 Apart on Palatine and Aventine,  
 Encircled each by angry partisans,  
 And searched with flashing eyes the morning sky,  
 Till augury of birds should set at rest  
 Their rivalry, and give a king to Rome.  
 Part shun the noisy crew : their soul disdains  
 To make unconscious bird, to other men  
 A sign of peace, occasion of dispute :  
 Nor dare they wrong themselves and those they love  
 By ruinous gaming, or profanely mix  
 Unholy gain with increase fairly got  
 By honest hands. Seeking a grateful change  
 Of occupation, in a sheltered nook  
 Of garden ground they delve the trenched bed  
 To blanch the celery stalk, or under glass  
 Uprear the choice exotic, gladiolus,  
 Dark-leaved camellia, or the pallid rose

That droops with its own sweetness, and compels  
The momentary wish that every sense  
Were gathered into smelling, and inhaled  
To sweet inebriation such perfume.

And part emancipate the inner man  
From six days' rust, and jarring accident  
By music's universal sympathies :  
So fingers, darkened by the ingrained dust  
Of carbon, lightly move the agile bow ;  
Or waken silvery chimings from the keys  
Of sweet piano, or the deeper tones  
Of mimic organ rich in harmonies.

Thus in the twilight plays the dreaming boy  
And marvels at the dream his music shows :  
His mother sits apart and holds her babe,  
And knows not that her tears are falling fast ;  
For that familiar strain has borne away  
Her simple spirit to " Jerusalem  
The Golden," all her own are gathered in ;  
With folded wings she sees her baby come,  
The tiniest of the angels, baby still,  
With baby kisses, and her collier lad  
Is dressed in white, and strikes a harp of gold.





v.

## SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

*ὡς ἂν τροφὸς θάλπη τὰ ἑαυτῆς τέκνα.*

**T**HE early bell rings in the Sunday morn ;  
And finds its echo in all Christian hearts  
That hail the sound, as of a Mother's voice  
Bidding her children seek within her home  
The comfort of a Heavenly Father's love.  
But as the spirit of Music hath no tale  
To whisper in the unenamoured breast  
Of him whose ear is closed to harmony ;  
So dullard souls skill not to read aright  
Their mother's message, and the bell at prime  
To them is sounding metal—nothing more ;  
Or at the most an index of the hour,  
A sign that bids them turn upon their beds,  
And close their eyes, and fold their hands to sleep.  
To save the young from fatal lethargy,  
And train the ear within to apprehend  
The sweetness of the Gospel symphonies,  
We tend with constant care the Sunday School.

But whence came this fair tree with weekly fruit,  
 And balmy leaves to heal a nation's wounds?  
 It sprang indigenous in that sweet vale  
 Where fair Sabrina rolls her lucent wave ;  
 But all unlike the plants of weaker growth  
 That flourish only in their native soil,  
 It spans its broadest girth afar from home,  
 And reaches o'er the vast Lancastrian plain,  
 Briareus-like, a hundred helping arms.  
 Some poisonous things may lurk beneath its shade ;  
 Not therefore must we fell the noble stem,  
 And rend the foliage, where a myriad host  
 Of birds and bees find harbourage and food :  
 But strong in patient wisdom disentwine  
 The parasite, and prune, where need may be,  
 Its arrogant luxuriance of shade.  
 So shall its roots strike deeper, till they reach  
 The Living Rock ; and each aspiring bough  
 Adorn, and not conceal, the steeple-cross  
 Gleaming mid-air, but point the self-same way.

This verdant tree, alive with humming bees  
 And singing birds throughout the sacred day,  
 We show with pride to Southron sojourner.  
 "But who are these?" "Our children." For he  
 sees

Among the elder scholars bushy chins,  
 And maiden forms matured to womanhood.  
 Nor only such, but duly ranged around  
 In listening circles, many a lad and lass,  
 Descending by a graduated scale  
 To tender infants, with their pattering feet,  
 And lisping speech attempting text and hymn.

No spurious dignity of early teens  
That scorns forsooth the childishness of school,  
Is here at work to draw our youth away.  
Their hearts, unchecked by force centrifugal  
Of evil fashion, keep the impulse true  
That leads their footsteps to the old school-door.  
The lad increased in stature may o'ertop  
His teacher by the head ; or, quick to learn,  
May far outgrow his narrow round of thought,  
And know his well-worn maxims all by rote,  
Yet fill a scholar's place, and yield to all  
The admonitions of authority :  
Till he himself assumes the curule chair,  
And hands to younger generations down  
The "milk for babes" that he imbibed long since  
Upon that very bench, a little child.  
As doves frequent the self-same rocky cleft,  
Till threatening snare invade their snug retreat ;  
Our duteous maidens thus will flock to school,  
Till solemn banns, to be proclaimed one day,  
Foreshadowing the matrimonial net,  
And dread of "cause or just impediment"  
Shall scare them fluttering from their ancient haunts  
To thickest shade, impervious to the light.

O Sunday Teachers, true philanthropists,  
Right noble is the station where you watch,  
And build the wall of Sion, as of old  
They built who in the left hand held the spear  
And with the right hand laboured at the work,  
"From rising day till evening stars appeared."  
In later days so laboured Aquila,  
Priscilla, blameless pair ; and sisters four,

True yoke-fellows, the virgin progeny  
 Of Philip the Evangelist, who dwelt  
 At Cæsarea ; and his hand who wrote  
 To little children and to strong young men,  
 For he had heard the Risen Master bid  
 His comrade, " Feed my sheep " and " Feed my  
 lambs."

Lay-preachers are ye ; leaders of the blind ;  
 Instructors of the foolish ; ministers,  
 Each to his own, of the good Word of God.  
 'Tis yours to leave the signet of the cross  
 Imprinted on the warm soft hearts that bring  
 To you with guileless, wistful confidence  
 Their mute appeal for aid. 'Tis yours to guide  
 The feet that long to tread the narrow way  
 But fear to wander in the good old paths  
 Worn by the steps of martyr and of saint,  
 From Font, through Holy Confirmation Rite,  
 To Sacramental oneness with the Lord.  
 Nor deem your charge fulfilled, when by your side  
 The trembling spirit sighs, in ecstasy,  
 " My Lord, my God," and feeds with faith on Him :  
 But guide, rebuke, instruct, encourage still,  
 Smile with the glad, and weep with them that weep.  
 Ah, some will fall away in spite of care,  
 Perchance the best beloved, the trusted one,  
 The child of fairest promise. Such a loss  
 Is grievous as the travailing mother's pain,  
 Who looks upon the babe, for which she yearned,  
 A dead cold thing. Yet in your sorrow, hope.  
 The Truth you teach, a spark of Life Divine,  
 Is quick with latent power to relume  
 The darkened spirit after many days.



Have faith in God ! Though here you never see  
The change for which you long, and weep, and pray,  
What rapture will be yours to meet again  
The sometime wanderer on the King's Right Hand,  
And hear the well-known voice, " Safe, safe, dear friend ;  
You taught me : I repented : He forgave."





VI.

GOOD TEMPLARS.

" A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine,  
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine."



TAND here a minute, friend, and see them  
pass

In long procession, half amused, half shamed,  
At broidered collar and mysterious badge,

" The sign of their profession," men and boys,

A straggling column, not reduced by drill

To measured step and nicely-balanced form ;

Yet trudging briskly to the even time

Of martial music, which a youthful band,

With cheeks distended, vigorously puffs

From brass sonorous, and reverberates

With ceaseless beats upon the hollow drum.

Good Templars all ! But, ah ! how changed from those

Who bore that name when Lion-Heart was king ;

Such as Sir Walter painted on the page

Of " Ivanhoe," shouting their battle-cry,

Beau Seant ! and couching lance invincible

Within pavilioned lists ; or, saturnine,

Pacing with haughty step and folded arms  
The sounding courts of feudal Templestowe :  
The fairest Flower of Chivalry ; if so  
Red Cross and snowy mantle were true signs  
Of knightly honour, faith, and chastity.

How changed from those ! And yet a high resolve  
Gleams under this ungraceful mimicry  
Of pageant mediæval, which redeems  
Its bravery from utter childishness.  
Not theirs to save the Holy Sepulchre  
From Christian wrangling, as the olden knights  
From Paynim hordes. Few of these Templars good  
Would draw a sword or raise a hand to keep  
The Wood of the True Cross, could It be found,  
Dark with the blood of Christ, from common use.  
So many blows at Superstition aimed  
Have missed their mark and fall'n on Reverence,  
That Reverence is dying day by day.  
Hence grand Cathedrals turned to concert halls,  
And " O Baal, hear us !" impious refrain,  
Chorussed before the Altars of our God.  
Hence Churches levelled, and God's acre ploughed  
By screaming engine, heedless of the hearts  
That burn indignant for the outraged dead.

Utilitarian Templars these, who march,  
Drum, fife, read resolutions and amend,  
Petition, lavish native eloquence,  
To burst the chain a fiend has rivetted  
Around the Anglo-Norman, else were he  
The unrivalled master of this modern world.  
This is the rescue that they meditate

To save themselves and save their countrymen  
From poisonous pollution ; aye, to wrest  
The fiery cup from the sot's trembling clutch,  
And make him free against his craven will.  
Shall we not laud their zeal? Aye, more, not less,  
Because their thoughts are clothed in barbarous phrase,  
Because the applauding hands are rough with work,  
And fitter for the pick than for the pen.  
March on, good men, your cause at least is just ;  
'Twere ill for us to blame such earnestness  
In furthering Good, altho' we deem the means  
Ill-suited to the end. For we contrast  
Your peaceful demonstration, pure intent,  
With that fierce multitude across the Strait,  
Whose drumming means no tilt at moral wrong ;  
But atheism, outrage, sacrilege,  
Petroleum, and the murderous fusillade.  
The king ye would decapitate is Vice ;  
And vice so hideous, 'tis no marvel if  
The hate wherewith ye hate it overleap  
At times the boundaries of common sense.  
No marvel : for ye see what ravages  
The demon Drunkenness makes in the homes  
And brains and hearts of working Englishmen.  
Alas for populous Lancashire, 'tis here  
The monster holds his den. On every side  
He scatters fatal trophies, ghastlier far  
Than human fragments in the ogre books  
That terrified our childhood ; here a hand  
Cut off which earned the starving children's bread ;  
And there the long fair hair of womanhood  
Begrimed with mire ; lost honour, body, soul.

Would you behold it with your eyes? Come, then,  
Visit the workman's quarter ; come to-night.  
'Tis rife with typhoid-sporules, but fear not,  
They find slow settlement in well-fed frames,  
And what we seek is easy to be found.  
Hark ! what a piercing shriek ; now enter ; see ;  
Stop, madman ! spare the woman ! Ah, she's down.  
Just Heaven ! that iron clog has cut its way  
Into the very brain ! Pah ! come away :  
See, the police have bound the maniac,  
The patient surgeon binds the woman's wounds ;  
Here's nothing new or strange ; she shares this lot  
With many thousand sisters. All could show  
Their " poor dumb wounds," appalling evidence,  
Against the evil these Good Templars hate.  
You say the truth ; 'twere hard to find a brute  
So savage towards his mate in Afric wilds.  
But Circe's cup has changed kind men to beasts ;  
Turning the human current of the blood  
To bestial, and then maddening the brute.

To leave a nobler picture on your mind  
Of English manliness, as we return  
To regions civilised, hear me relate  
A doughty deed, accomplished on the heights  
Of Inkermann,\* some twenty years ago.

That morn a common soldier, Bancroft, stood  
Within the Sand-bag Battery : in front  
The Russians swarmed : our Red-coats were but few.  
It came to pass that this said grenadier,  
Following the impulse of his valiant heart,

\* See Mr. Kinglake's description of the battle.

Had joined a desperate sortie, and now fought,  
Cut off from aid, alone amid fierce foes.  
Then might you see the force of British pluck.  
His bayonet slew the first ; but in the act  
Of slaying, off his guard, a Russian blade,  
Transfixing either jaw, pinned cheek to cheek.  
He staggered for an instant, but the next  
Had shot the Russian dead who wounded him.  
A third foe fell : but still he found a fourth  
And fifth assailant, one on either side.  
A second bayonet pierced him, and he fell :  
But, like Antæus, fresh from mother-earth  
To rise once more and lay a foeman low.  
One now remained to wage an equal fight,  
Yet most unequal : for the prostrate man,  
Not slain, but sorely wounded, twined his arms  
Around brave Bancroft, dragging him to earth.  
Then fighting for dear life against such odds,  
And parrying as he could the front attack,  
To free himself from this disabling grasp  
He kicked (as who would not?) the clinging foe.  
A sergeant chanced to see him fighting thus,  
And rushing to the rescue, cried aloud,  
His honest English heart disdaining aught  
Of foul or cowardly, " Enough, forbear.  
Strike him not, Bancroft, for the man is down."

Such is the untaught Briton at his best :  
Here you may see him so debased by drink,  
That while one kicks his moaning wife to death,  
Some dozen ruffians stand unheeding by ;  
'Tis no affair of theirs to interpose.  
Drum therefore, O ye Templars, drum such rogues

Out of the land, or rather bring them back  
At once to manhood and sobriety.  
Our English stock is sound, but mar the best,  
And oftentimes you change it to the worst.  
You hesitate, dear friend, you cannot quite  
Commend these efforts. Doubtless (you admit),  
Bacchus is one with Belial ; and his host  
Of Satyrs, one part human, two parts brute,  
Express the degradation, not the woe,  
Which drunkenness entails : but these good men  
Will hardly mend the matter, for you deem  
Good Templars undiscerning fanatics  
Who pull the house down to destroy the rat ;  
Who wildly misinterpret holy texts  
To suit their purpose, and pronounce unclean  
What God hath blest, the produce of the vine ;  
The wine that gladdeneth the heart of man ;  
The wine that cheered the bridegroom and the bride  
Of Cana, and is Symbol of the Blood  
Which pleads our pardon at the Throne of God.  
You tell me Temperance is the higher life,  
And that we need no new society,  
No mimicry of mediæval pomp,  
We Christians, who were pledged as soldiers true  
To fight against the Devil and the flesh ;  
Not only drunkenness, but avarice,  
And all impurity of act or thought.  
You warn us while we shrink from all abuse  
Of God's sweet bounty, that we count it not  
Unclean, but use it well, for it is good.  
Who can gainsay your words? And yet methinks  
I would not stay that drumming if I might.  
When men are roused by misery and wrong

To set things right, you cannot draw a line  
Just so far off, and hold them on this side !  
A mountain-evil needs a giant's force  
To move it ; and the giants of these days  
Are all enthusiasts, who surge towards  
Their object heedless of the paths they tread.  
The drowning man blames not the violence  
Of the curled wave that whirled him like a straw  
And dashed him high upon the rocky strand ;  
It bruised his limbs withal, but saved his life.





PART II.

**Sacred Poems.**





## SACRED POEMS.

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### THE STRAIT GATE.

*Στενή ἡ πύλη, καὶ τεθλιμμένη ἡ ὁδὸς ἡ ἀπάγουσα εἰς τὴν ζωὴν.*

**T**RAIT is the gate." This was the preacher's text.

Reluctant at the first the stream flowed out,  
As if its unseen impetus were vexed  
By rocklike obstacles, that lurked about  
The door of utterance, and half confined  
The thoughts that welled to light from unknown depths  
of mind.

But still we listened : for we knew ere long  
Those slow uncertain gushes would expand  
Into a river, rolling fresh and strong  
Its brimming water through the thirsty land,  
Inviting all that human is to drink  
The 'diamond drops of love that sparkled at its brink.

And so it come to pass : the accents clear,  
 The avalanche of words, the kindling glance,  
 Compelled the all but earless dolt to hear,  
 Then rapt the hearer to a holy trance :  
 And when the last sublimest climax rose,  
 " Strait is the Gate," was still the cadence at its close.

That night I dreamt a dream. I seemed to see  
 The images that preacher's sacred art  
 Had wrought by heavenly photography  
 Upon the fleshly tablets of my heart,  
 Stand out before me. Dream so clear and plain  
 I never dreamt before—shall never dream again.

Methought I saw a distant city stand  
 Above dark mountains piled about its base,  
 Stately and fair, upon a table land ;  
 Like some cloud city, radiant with a grace  
 Reflected from within, and lovelier far  
 Than ever gleamed from sun, or rounded moon, or star.

And as I gazed, there stirred a little breeze  
 That wafted to the spot whereon I stood  
 A summer fragrance from ambrosial trees,  
 Of bloom, and dropping balm, and odorous wood ;  
 And strains of harping floated on the blast ;  
 I could but bate my breath, and listen while they past.

" Would God," I said to one who lingered near,  
 " Some clue might lead me to a home so fair ;  
 No labour I should grudge, no peril fear,  
 So I might gain at length my freedom there."  
 " Go, ask," he answered, " yonder multitude,  
 That throng, like swarming bees, yon gate and Holy  
 Rood."

I sought the crowd ; and lo ! an open door,  
Through which a well-girt traveller might march  
With pilgrim staff in hand, and nothing more,  
Bending his head beneath the narrowing arch ;  
So entered, while I gazed, but two or three :  
Around the portal swarmed a murmuring company.

And in their midst I was aware of one,  
Arrayed in white, whose voice and face I knew,  
That preacher, and his eyes with pity shone  
To see the passage traversed by so few ;  
And ever and anon above the hum  
He lifted up his voice : " The door is open, come ! "

" Good sir," I cried in haste, " if so I may,  
How gladly will I pass this blessed gate !  
Tell me at once the price that I must pay ;  
The road is long ; I fear to be too late."  
Smiling, he said, " The way to Paradise  
Is open now to all, for One has paid the price."

I stood amazed ; " Ah, wherefore then," I said,  
" The tarrying of this multitude, who stand  
With gloomy brow, or sadly shaking head,  
And clutch their burdens with a tightening hand.  
Why this dejection, if the way be free ? "  
" Behold," he said, " and thou mayst solve the mystery."

I stood aside, and marked a gentle youth,  
A very " rose of youths," so fair and wise ;  
His brow was whitened by the hand of Truth ;  
And Hope had stored her azure in his eyes  
Intent upon the city far away,  
And brightening like the east with glow of coming day.

To whom the Warder, and he spake as one  
Who loved him well : " I set an open door  
Before thy face : delay not, O my son,  
To tread the path all saints have travelled o'er ;  
Not one of all that band, with joy elate,  
But trod this narrow way, and passed this lowly gate."

Then he assayed to pass with hurried pace,  
As though athirst with saintly ones to mix ;  
But lo ! his casket, borne with dainty grace,  
Was roughly jostled by a Crucifix,  
Whose thorn-crowned Brow, and piercèd Feet and Side,  
And outstretched bleeding Hands for love and pity cried.

Vain was his utmost striving ; all in vain  
The toil with lightened burden he pursued ;  
Returning, but to be repelled again,  
And baffled by the stern, unyielding Rood.  
The swimmer thus resolved some wreck to reach  
Relentless waves fling back despairing on the beach.

Then spake the Warder pityingly : " My son,  
Thou and thy cherished casket first must part ;  
Cast all those pearls away—the darling one  
That thou art hiding nearest to thy heart ;  
For He, whose Image writhes on yonder Tree,  
Gave Pearls and Rubies, yea, His Tears and Blood for thee.

Once more the prospect of the city wall  
Bedewed his eyes with drops of fond regret ;  
But that most precious casket held his all ;  
He could not cast it from him. No, not yet !  
Ah, craven spirit, shrinking from the cost,  
Poor gain is all this world, if thine own soul be lost !

I mused thereon, and weeping, lo, I heard,  
 Or seemed to hear upon the sighing breeze  
 Those angel-harpers strike a minor chord  
 Amidst the joyance of their harmonies ;  
 "Return, dear boy, why wilt thou die?" they say,  
 But he, with drooping head, goes slowly on his way.

And now the roll of wheel, and tramp of hoof,  
 And dusty whirlwind curling up the street,  
 Warned the expectant multitude aloof,  
 And claimed their homage and obeisance meet  
 For Fashion's daughters, rich in silken fold,  
 And braided towers of hair, and ears distort with gold.

"Throw open wide the gate," a courier cried,  
 "Their ladyships would visit yonder town ;  
 All other pleasant places they have tried,  
 And hitherward are drawn by the renown  
 Of those eternal fountains, which men say  
 O'er groves of fairest fruit disperse a rainbow spray."

The Warder answered : "Yonder arch of stone  
 May not be entered in such lordly guise,  
 Both rich and poor may make those joys their own,  
 But few of this world's wealthy, great, and wise,  
 Will bend the lofty brow of pride so low,  
 As through this narrow gate, beneath the Cross, to go.

"Strip off, fair dames, those weeds of vanity ;  
 Reject those purchased tresses ; vail your own ;  
 Unclasp the bracelet, let both hands be free  
 To wash the saints' feet. Thus 'tis yours alone,  
 Through self-denial, lowliness, and strife,  
 To reach the Rainbow Fount, and pluck the Fruit of Life.

“Descend ! No chariot rolls these walls between,  
 ’Tis a steep *foot*-way rising to yon cloud,  
 On foot the Lord Himself, and our dear Queen——”  
 Thus far they listened ; then their laughter loud  
 Could be suppress no longer. “Turn,” they cried,  
 “Along the broad highway, and through the portals wide.”

Then I awoke, to cast *my* treasure down :  
 “Thy way, not mine, O Lord,” I weeping said,  
 “I ask no more the Saints’ illustrious crown  
 And home of glory ; let me only tread  
 In Thy meek footprints ; see Thy servant stand  
 As Jacob stood of yore by Jordan, staff in hand.

“I see Thine arms of love extended wide ;  
 I look upon the Blood that Thou hast shed ;  
 Surely this world to me is crucified,  
 And I henceforth to joys of sin am dead.  
 Live Thou alone in me, O Life Divine,  
 And teach this heart to beat in unison with Thine.”

So with the hands of faith and love I claspt  
 His bleeding feet, nor thought of other bliss,  
 But only how my Jesus’ love surpast  
 All love of men or angels. This, oh this,  
 To sinner, such as I, was very Heaven,  
 To kneel beneath the Cross, and weep, and be forgiven.

And thus I past the Gate with earnest will ;  
 And as I journey, gleams I sometimes see  
 Of that bright home, that all my spirit thrill ;  
 But oftener clouds and darkness compass me.  
 It may be that the darkness will increase,  
 But Thou art with me, Lord, and *all* Thy way is peace.





### ASCENSION.

**ENTWINE** thy pink white chaplet, May ;  
Gush forth mid-air thy liquid lay,  
Bird-spirit sky-ascending ;  
Ring out, church-bells, your loudest chime,  
And honour well this holy time,  
Your eight-fold voices blending.

The hawthorn blossoms as before ;  
The lark is here to sing and soar  
Across the morning ether,  
So high, as scarce to hear the bells  
Whose brazen-throated music swells  
A thousand feet beneath her.

But May's fair dew wreaths will fade ;  
The quiring lark that heaven assayed,  
Fall voiceless mid the clover ;  
And those brave notes, rung out so fast,  
And multiplied upon the blast,  
When sinks the wind, be over.

So, gathered in the Sacred Fane,  
We wake the high Ascension strain  
    With voice and heart and fingers ;  
'Tis joy ; and yet not joy alone,  
A cadence sad, an undertone  
    Around the anthem lingers.

'Tis joy, for bliss awaits Him now !  
'Tis joy, for crowns adorn His brow !  
    But while we hear the story,  
And see those faithful bosoms swell,  
And sink beneath His last farewell,  
    We half forget the glory.

Then faithful hearts begin to yearn,  
Impatient for our King's return,  
    And that long-promised morrow,  
Whose dawning, ne'er to fade again,  
Shall disentwine our triumph strain  
    From every note of sorrow.

But while we watch and long and pray,  
Oh, haste we to prepare His way  
    By acts of loving duty ;  
Content to toil till life be past,  
So He shall glad our eyes at last,  
    The King in Royal Beauty.





## SS. SIMON AND JUDE.

**T**ELL us, twin champions, souls to Jesus dear,  
On what wild coasts ye dared the cross uprear;  
What victories ye won, what perils past,  
And how ye gained your martyr-palms at last.

We ask and listen : empty echoes sweep  
Through caverns where unstoried ages sleep ;  
No voice replies, or broken sounds that seem  
The undistinguished mutterings of a dream ;  
Or mimic ocean tides that ebb and swell  
Within the spiral hollows of a shell :  
Tradition's dubious witness, and no more,  
That Simon won his crown on Britain's shore ;  
But neither cross nor cromlech marks the spot,  
Or if there be, its meaning is forgot.  
No matter : for the King shall come again ;  
And every eye behold that Faithful twain  
Enthroned beneath the Royal Oriflamb,  
Two of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb ;  
And all brave deeds, unchronicled by men,  
Will be proclaimed to earth and heaven then !

O Christian, inmate of life's shadiest vale,  
O hero of an unrecorded tale  
Too homely to embellish history's page,  
Too tame to wake the high poetic rage ;  
What if, like theirs, thy duties simply done  
Be writ in light more glorious than the sun,  
Congenial fruit of apostolic stem,  
Upon the walls of New Jerusalem ?  
If pitying alms, forgotten soon as given,  
Be stored for thee a hundred-fold in heaven ?  
If silent tapers burnt at Jesus' shrine  
Illuminate a glory that shall soon be thine ?  
Though Amorites may lord it for a day,  
And Abraham's seed sojourn in tents : yet stay  
Till darkness and confusion pass away.  
Then shall the meek, in right of royal birth,  
Possess the ransomed heritage of earth ;  
Then shall the day-spring from on high reveal  
What diamonds earth's envious depths conceal,  
And lilies, by the world's hard heel down-trod,  
Shall blossom in the bosom of their God.





## HOME SICKNESS.

*A BALLAD.*

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### PART I.

BEFORE THE BATTLE.

“Here we have no abiding city.”



WAY in the far Crimæa, when shades of  
evening fell,  
No sight, but the gleaming bayonet of moon-  
lit sentinel ;  
No sound, but his murmured challenge and heavy cease-  
less tramp,  
And the distant songs of the camp-fire betoken a British  
camp.

That night on the alien hill-side, in sad and thoughtful  
mood,  
Apart from their jësting comrades, two youthful soldiers  
stood,

And earnestly spake of Scotland, the country of their  
birth,  
Their kindred, and their affection—the dearest spot on  
earth.

They spake, and the patriot spirit, like eagle or fugitive  
dove,  
As swift as the aëry monarch, as true as the emblem of  
love ;  
Away from the trumpet and banner, and tread of march-  
ing men,  
Escaped to the blossoming heather, the mist-mantled  
mountain and glen.

Hark ! 'tis the voice of the younger, his summers are scarce  
seventeen,  
Heaven shield his fair head in the warfare he wages for  
country and queen ;  
“ My soul is athirst for Scotland—athirst—but in vain, in  
vain,  
I shall never set foot upon heather and climb the grey  
crag again.

“ To-morrow I carry the colours : fear not that I shall  
shame  
The land of our brave forefathers and Scotland's warrior  
fame ;  
My sword is unfleshed with slaughter, but never will I  
shrink back  
From the post of duty and glory, the front of the fierce  
attack.

“ Yet a voice I cannot silence—I think it is sent from on  
high—  
Is repeating its solemn warning, ‘To-morrow thou must  
die ;’  
It comes like the shrouded fingers in King Belshazzar’s  
hall,  
When ‘Mene, Mene, Tekel,’ was blazoned upon the  
wall.

“So, if I should fall in the battle (God’s will, not mine,  
be done !),  
You know that *she* is a widow, and I am her only son ;  
Give her this farewell letter, and this beloved book,  
The same that at my departure from her dear hand I  
took.

“ Say it has been my companion whatever soil I trod ;  
At first for her sake I read it, and then for myself and  
God.  
And tell her those dear old lessons she taught me with  
patient prayer,  
Came back with marvellous power when she was no  
longer there.

“ Then add, for that will give comfort, the tale of this  
moonlit hill,  
How here like brother with brother, in the evening calm  
and still,  
We bent the knee to our Father, commending, on hostile  
sod,  
Ourselves, and her, and Scotland, and all we held dear  
to God.

“Say, while we were reading together, I felt my spirit  
 burn  
 Within me to hear of pilgrims who never might return  
 To earthly kindred and nation ; but lo ! the Lord had  
 given  
 ‘A city which hath foundations,’ a better home in  
 heaven.”

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## PART II.

BY THE ARMY CHAPLAIN.

“We seek one to come.”

**I**N front, far up the trampled hill they found  
 him,—  
 They found him where he fell,  
 With broken blade and colours folded round  
 him  
 Keeping his boast too well.

Now bleeding, fainting, piteously wounded  
 In his own tent he lay ;  
 The brave young life that through his limbs had bounded  
 Was ebbing fast away.

Water, more water, cools the lips so blackened,  
 So tortured at the first ;  
 Ah, blessed draught ! The agony is slackened,  
 Yet murmurs he, “I thirst—



“ Not now for Alma’s wave, but Scotland’s fountains,  
All else to me is dry ;  
O that ’twere mine to see the dear blue mountains  
Once more before I die !

“ Ah ! mother, reft of life’s supremest treasure,  
If I could hear thee speak,  
If I could only feel thy lip’s soft pressure  
Upon my dying cheek ! ”

Poor gallant boy ! we wept to see him lying,  
Too young for such fell strife,  
His home affection even in death undying,  
Instinct with endless life !

I spake of Jesus, and His Crucifixion ;  
“ For thee, dear boy, He died,  
And now He bids thee hide thy soul’s affliction  
Within His Wounded Side.”

He thanked me for the word, with meek behaviour ;  
“ Ah, His was sorer loss,  
To thirst in vain for God, my Blessed Saviour,  
And die upon a cross.”

That day we ate and drank in calm Communion  
The quickening Wine and Bread,  
The soul’s sweet bond of Sacramental union  
With our ascended Head.

That so the Lamb, once led to death and slaughter,  
Might soothe this yearning pain ;  
For whoso drinketh of His living water  
Shall never *thirst* again.

Brief space before he died, the mist of fever  
O'erspread his lucid mind  
With thronging images, as fresh as ever,  
Of scenes long left behind.

Startling the watchers with strange names of places,  
In homely Scottish phrase ;  
And scraps of song which memory interlaces  
With childhood's happy days.

And still, wherever fitful fancy bore him,  
He seemed to hear a knell,  
And conjure up familiar things before him,  
Only to say, farewell.

At last a burning wish, before unspoken,  
For he had deemed it wrong,  
As soon as Reason's silver cord was broken,  
Burst forth in utterance strong.

"Not here," he pleaded ; "leave me not, dear mother,  
Here on this blood-stained strand ;  
Lay me beside my father, and my brother,  
At home, in fair Scotland."

It could not be ! Beside the Russian river,  
Wrapped in his tartan plaid,  
To sleep afar from home, but not for ever,  
The hero boy we laid.

And grandly rose that evening in September  
His chanted requiem ;  
"Fail this right hand, ere I no more remember  
Thee, O Jerusalem !"



THE EPISTLE AND THE GOSPEL FOR  
ALL SAINTS' DAY.

**I**N the dim nave I take my far-off station,  
A man of sullied heart and stammering lip,  
Nor dare to claim on this high celebration  
A portion in your choral fellowship.

The Co'lect prayed, I listen to the story <sup>1</sup>  
Wherein the youngest of the Seers has told,  
Triumphant Saints, what mystery of glory  
Your palms and glistening robes and crowns enfold.

I hear beneath the rapture of your voices  
A tenderness that singing Angels miss ;  
My lips are mute : yet, O, my heart rejoices  
To hear my King extolled in song like this !

Show me, I pray you, Choristers immortal,  
The tenor of your way in former years ;  
Say, did ye never falter at the portal,  
Or wander, and retrace your steps with tears ?

<sup>1</sup> For the Epistle--Rev. vii. 2-12.

Such saintliness your heavenly lot evinces,  
 With such a royal radiance ye shine,  
 Methinks ye must have moved, like God's own Princes,  
 Afar from such an erring course as mine.

A burst of praise ! and then the calm evangel <sup>1</sup>  
 Distilled a balmy answer on my heart,  
 As if some dear compassionating angel  
 Had flown from Heaven to talk with me apart.

No splendid gifts, no superhuman graces,  
 Marked out these Blessèd from their fellow-men ;  
 Those who sit foremost now in heavenly places  
 Were counted as the least and lowest then.

They were the Meek, the Gentle, the Pure-hearted,  
 Peace-loving souls still yearning peace to make,  
 The Persecuted, who serenely parted  
 With darling treasures for the Kingdom's sake.

And some, on beds of downy dalliance sleeping,  
 Were startled in the middle of the night,  
 To rise, and kiss the Piercèd Feet with weeping,  
 Till Blood and Water washt their raiment white.

“ Glory, O Lord, to thee ” for these Good-tidings,  
 And for the hope these Benedictions shed,  
 That contrite hearts, recovered from back-slidings  
 Among All Saints may yet be comfortèd.

All hail, sweet souls, strangers to me no longer.  
 Lambs of my flock, my neighbours and my friends,  
 Whom I have watched in meekness waxing stronger,  
 And ripening for the bliss that never ends.

<sup>1</sup> See the Gospel St. Matthew v. 1-12.

Calm, patient forms, on beds of anguish lying,  
How often have I claspt your pallid hand,  
And pointed through the restless strife of dying  
To peaceful mansions in the Fatherland.

Mourners for sin, how oft your supplication,  
Your sad confession has gone up with mine ;  
Ye souls athirst for Christ and His salvation,  
Together we have drunk the Mystic Wine !

Pray for me, dear companions, I entreat you,  
For one who often falls and quickly faints ;  
For one who weeps to think he may not meet you,  
To keep in Heaven this Festal of All Saints.





## THE STILL SMALL VOICE.



'ER the granite crags of Horeb swept the  
Tempest, Earthquake, Flame ;  
Then " a still small Voice," and with it  
The Shekinah came !

Rolled the ages wild and bloody, then the counterpart  
was heard

In the still small Voice of Jesus,  
God's Incarnate Word.

And that voice of gospel sweetness, far away thro' mart  
and street,

Jesu's Bride, and Jesu's Spirit,  
Everywhere repeat.

But the day of grace is waning, see its beams are pale  
and wan,

While the night of tribulation  
Darkly loometh on.

See beneath the falling night-cloud white wings of the  
Holy Dove,

And her stilly note is shaken  
With foreboding love ;

Ere she speed her flight reluctant to the fair home  
whence she came,  
Leaving this doomed world to Earthquake,  
Hurricane, and Flame !

O my soul, be up and doing, let not that sweet Dove  
depart,  
Weave for her a nest embowered  
In thy duteous heart.

If with hand and voice thou win her to abide thy willing  
Guest,  
In the midst of tribulation  
She will give thee rest.

So when rocks are rent asunder at that final Tempest  
blast,  
Thou shalt "close thy doors about thee"  
Till the storm be past.

So when Godless thrones are reeling at the heaving  
Earthquake shock,  
Thou shalt plant thy feet unswerving  
On the changeless Rock.

So the Fire that burns before Him like Vesuvius' lava-bed,  
Shall but wreath its lambent glories  
Round thy sheltered head.

Till, the days of vengeance shortened, sounds again  
the still small Voice,  
"Come, thou good and faithful servant,  
With thy Lord rejoice."



## CHRISTIAN WOMANHOOD.

“Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister.”



LOVING Lord, of woman born,  
And fed at woman's breast,  
Whose heart by man's rebellion torn  
In woman's love found rest.

O clothed by woman's pitying hand  
In marvel of the loom,  
By women watched—a faithful band—  
Beside the Cross and Tomb.

Direct each Christian woman's heart,  
That widow, maid, and wife,  
By cleaving to the better part,  
May gain eternal life.

Lead them to learn in maidenhood  
Of Mary, maiden mild,  
Who like a fragrant lily stood  
In meekness undefiled ;



And grew in beauty day by day,  
With dew celestial blest,  
Until the World's Creator lay  
Upon her virgin breast ;

That they, subduing wayward pride  
By holy Rite and Prayer,  
May kneel at Holy Altar-side,  
And feel Thy Presence there.

And when the silvery-sparkling rime  
Of maiden's early years  
Shall melt into the golden time  
Of matron smiles and tears ;

When cares and pleasures intervene  
"An undistinguished throng,"  
And swiftly whirl thro' shade or sheen  
Her stream of life along ;

Whatever action, thought, or sense  
Within her being have part,  
Distil Thy holy influence  
On hand, and head, and heart ;

That so no darling child's embrace,  
No husband of her choice,  
Retard her new-born fruits of Grace,  
And hide the Bridegroom's voice ;

Nor fashion's ever-shifting tide,  
Nor daily household care,  
Allure her from Thy sheltering side,  
Or wean her soul from prayer.

And when at length the shades of night  
Are closing round her head,  
Her children scattered from her sight,  
The one, who loved her, dead ;

In that long lonely eventide,  
That weary waiting-hour,  
Haste, Son of Mary, to abide  
With her in love and power,

And bid her failing spirit bear  
All solitude and pain,  
In hope of Home Eternal, where  
Her dead shall live again.

But some have chosen Mary's part,  
And wear the Virgin weed  
For Thee, the Virgin Lamb, who art  
'Midst lilies wont to feed ;

Content to labour day and night,  
With love that never faints,  
To weave the Raiment fair and white,  
To wash the feet of Saints ;

To watch alone while others sleep,  
While others laugh to pray,  
And trim the silver lamps they keep  
All burning until Day.

For them no bridegroom's tender kiss,  
No babe's caressing hand ;  
Life's flowery paths they calmly miss,  
Like strangers in the land.

But such pure souls in heaven above  
Thy kindred soul will choose,  
And recompense with sweeter love  
The love they now refuse.

For Thou wilt teach Thy virgin choirs  
The Song no Saint can learn,  
And jewels set of purer fires,  
On purer brows to burn.

I hear Thy voice in gentle tone  
To each sweet sister say,  
“ Rise up, my love, my bride, my own,  
Rise up, and come away.

“ Lo ! after weary winter glooms,  
Thy Sun has chased the showers ;  
Now thy eternal home assumes  
Its beauty of spring flowers.

“ The time of singing birds comes on,  
The ring-dove coos her lay,  
Rise up, my fair, belovèd one,  
Rise up, and come away.”

Then those chaste souls who patient trod  
A barren path below,  
Shall follow Thee, the Lamb of God,  
Wherever Thou mayst go.

Through gorgeous worlds beyond the sky,  
Through such a dream of bliss,  
That every wondering voice shall cry,  
“ What poet imaged this ? ”

Yet no created place or thing,  
No heights of fair renown,  
To these enraptured souls will bring  
Their joy's supremest crown.

But all their glory, all their pride,  
To hear the Bridegroom say,  
"Rise up, my fair, my love, my bride,  
Rise up, and come away."





### THE LAMB AND THE DOVE.

**W**ITH a lily in her hand,  
With her infant like the others,  
See a youthful matron stand,  
Meekest of the Hebrew mothers.  
This is Mary, undefiled,  
Mary and the Holy Child.

Some would offer gifts of price,  
Keeping thus the law of Moses,  
Spotless lambs, in sacrifice,  
Chapletted with leaves and roses.  
Mary, with the poorest sort,  
Only milk-white turtles brought.

Not a lamb. Yet Mary knew,  
If she heard the Message rightly ;  
If the glowing hymns were true,  
Angels whispered round her nightly,  
All the lambs at altars shown  
Were but shadows of her own.

*SACRED POEMS.*

Dear to us, indeed, Thou art,  
Holy Mother, Lowly Maiden,  
Pondering marvels in thine heart ;  
With the world's salvation laden ;  
Lamb to take our sins away,  
Dove within our souls to stay.





## THE SHIPWRECK.

*A BALLAD.*

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SCENE :--*A Family Party in a Cottage, on Christmas Eve.*

FATHER.



MERRIE Christmas ! A merrie Christmas !  
May God's good blessing comfort all !  
We fare as merrily here in the cottage as our  
good Squire and his friends at the hall.

FIRST CHILD.

See how baby and Ellen are sitting, the firelight flickering  
over head ;  
It makes me think of the Virgin Mary and Jesus in the  
cattle-shed.

SECOND CHILD.

I wish we could see the three Wise Men and all their  
slaves come in at the door,  
With crowns of gold, and purple raiment, and all the  
beautiful gifts they bore.

## MOTHER.

You're thinking of the Christmas Carols ; we shall dream  
about them, I believe,  
To me they were like the voices of angels rejoicing on  
this Holy Eve.

## CHILDREN.

Mother, may we be Carol singers when Christmas-tide  
comes round once more,  
And stand and sing to you and father, like little angels,  
outside the door ?

## MOTHER.

The children are quite worn-out with playing, and early  
hours are the healthiest,  
Now kneel we down and thank our Father before the  
little ones go to rest.

[*They kneel, and the Father prays.*

## FATHER.

Now to bed, and up in the morning ! Up, and out in the  
frosty weather,  
We shall muster a goodly party trooping off to the church  
together.

[*The little Children retire.*

## MOTHER.

Husband, why did thy firm voice falter ? Wherefore saw  
I the starting tear ?  
Surely we ought to be very happy with all our children  
around us here.



## FATHER.

Trembled my soul at the children's question ; rose un-  
bidden a doubting pain,  
While they were speaking of *next* year's Carols, whether  
we *all* might hear them again.

## MOTHER.

Courage ! let us trust our Father : faith makes all things  
clear and bright ;  
Let the Past enlighten the Future ! Is not William with  
us to-night ?

## FATHER.

Draw we now our circle closer, friends and kinsmen  
loving and true ;  
William shall tell, while the yule-log blazes, all the perils  
God brought him through.

## WILLIAM'S STORY.

On board the luckless " Ocean Queen,"  
Luckless the hand that wrought her !  
We glided past the woodland screen  
That skirts Southampton Water.  
'Twas my first voyage ; and years before  
I made a childish boast  
Of heart-felt longings to explore  
The wonders of each unknown shore,  
Each undiscovered coast :  
But *then* my heart was full of care  
For home and kindly faces there.

I thought of father and of mother,  
How loving they had been ;  
And still more fondly of another  
Whom I had lately seen,  
And loved for ever ; whose affection  
Will hallow all my life.  
Dear Ellen, now you sit beside me,  
And if I praise, your eyes will chide me,  
My own beloved wife !  
But, Ellen, you will let me say  
I thought of you—it made me pray.

We sailors seem a jovial set,  
As light as ocean-foam,  
But in our hearts we ne'er forget  
The dear ones left at home.  
And when we keep the midnight watch,  
The home stars overhead,  
And listen to the quiet tide  
Rippling against the vessel's side,  
Full many a tear is shed ;  
And yet our messmates never see  
This tribute paid to memory.

Toil-harden'd, dissolute, untaught,  
Ours was a godless crew ;  
So every calmer purer thought  
Was given to Heaven and you ;  
Yet not quite all : for there was one,  
A younger lad than I,  
Still quite a child, the skipper's son,  
Whose gentle speech and bearing won  
Kind looks from every eye.

He flourish'd like a blossom fair  
Perfuming pestilential air.

Good angels spread a covering  
Around this lonely child,  
To ward off every hurtful thing,  
And keep him undefiled.  
For him the skipper school'd his tongue,  
And smooth'd his surly mood.  
So knowing not the Apostle's plan,  
"Simple of ill," a course he ran,  
"But wise in all things good."  
Yes, angels watch by land and sea,  
Where'er Christ's little ones may be !

He knew, for he had learnt by love,  
What books cannot impart,  
Wisdom which cometh from above,  
God's teaching in the heart—  
And nothing more—so I became  
His teacher day by day ;  
But Heaven works by whom it will,  
And, mother, I remembered still  
Those prayers you heard me say,  
'Twas while we prayed he understood  
That Jesus saves us by His Blood.

And very soon he'seemed to know  
More truths than I could tell ;  
The Bible says it shall be so,  
For I remember well  
How Jesus thanked the Lord of Heaven

Who shows to infant eyes  
Those mysteries of the Better Land  
Which others may not understand,  
    Though prudent men and wise.  
Baptized anew he seemed to be  
Within the cloud and on the sea !

So while the "Ocean Queen" sped on  
    Through calm or stormy weather,  
The Love that "seeketh not her own"  
    Knit our two souls together ;  
And every day young Robert grew  
    In holiness apace,  
I saw celestial sweetness rise,  
Like parting glow from sunset skies,  
    And mantle o'er his face.  
He stood prepared in early spring  
A sheaf for God's ingathering.

There is a bank of shifting sand  
    Off from the mainland rent ;  
In olden days 'twas Godwin's land  
    The kingly Earl of Kent.  
It stretcheth many a league at sea,  
    A dismal waste and dry  
When tides recede ; but hid from sight,  
Oft as the usurper claims his right  
    With white crest foaming high.  
Our bark was steered by drunken hand,  
We drifted on the dangerous strand.

A ship may strike on sunken rock,  
    And yet come safe to shore ;

Capsized by sudden tempest shock,  
    May right herself once more ;  
But, fallen on stern Earl Godwin's coast,  
    God help the good ship then !  
'Twould force the hardest eyes to weep  
Could those dank dungeons show their heap  
    Of buried ships and men,  
Of hands outstretcht in wild despair,  
Or claspt in penitential prayer !

Our sailors quickly understand  
    The inevitable woe ;  
The keel, embedded in the sand,  
    Lies rocking to and fro,  
Dragged down, as by some demon hand,  
    To horrid gulfs below.  
"The Goodwin Sands ! The Goodwin Sands !  
    The quicksand sucks us in !"  
We rise and struggle for dear life,  
Ah, vain the effort, vain the strife ;  
    Already waves begin  
To sweep at will the shuddering deck,  
And scream above the sinking wreck.

We looked for aid, but aid was none  
    For our ill-fated bark ;  
We had no boat, no signal-gun,  
    The night was wild and dark.  
Yet knew we where the life-boat lay  
    Upon the beach at Deal !  
O could ye only, only know,  
    Deal boatmen true as steel,  
Right soon your mighty measured row  
    Would lift the milk-white keel,

To glide like silver-breasted dove  
Upon a holy quest of love !

Athwart the mist, against the blast  
Our eyes and ears we strain,  
But only see the shortened mast,  
And hear the bellowing main.  
"Some bark may *now* be sailing past !"  
We shout, but shout in vain.  
Hope is long-lived ; it seldom fails  
Save with the failing breath.  
Hope struggled on, then died, and then—  
I saw full forty godless men  
Stand front to front with death !  
What things I saw it were not well  
For you to hear or me to tell.

No, let me rather speak of him—  
The boy so young and true ;  
I watched him in the flickering gleam  
A hanging lanthorn threw.  
In the ship's bows, apart from all,  
Apart from all save one,  
With pleading face I saw him stand  
And clasp his father's rough right hand  
Fondly between his own :  
The father looked with troubled eye,  
The child was speaking earnestly.

In truth it was the strangest scene,  
Where all was strange and wild,  
The strong man with dependent mien,  
The weak yet fearless child.

The shepherd tended by the lamb ;  
The leader gently led ;  
The bold encouraged by the meek ;  
The strong supported by the weak ;  
But have ye never read,  
“ More than my teachers, Lord, I know ;  
And wiser than the aged grow ? ”

Just then upon his upturn'd brow  
A fuller light was given ;  
'Twas ever a sweet face—but now  
Like angel's fresh from heaven !  
He heeded not the inky sky,  
Nor heard the billows roll ;  
The day-spring of Eternity  
Was rising in his soul !  
The father gazed : his pride gave way,  
And on the deck he knelt to pray.

Some childish, half-remembered prayer  
I saw his lips repeat ;  
O deem not it was lost in air,  
For Robert knelt beside him there  
In intercession sweet,  
Such as good angels love to bear  
Up to the Mercy-seat.  
The dying cry of such a son  
Was surely heard in Heaven ;  
And this poor sinner's pardon won,  
His many sins forgiven.  
Such was my thought that fearful night,  
I know not if the thought be right.

The impious crew—ah ! where were they ?  
 But few remained on deck ;  
 For some the waves had washed away,  
 And others hoped to float till day  
 On fragments of the wreck.  
 My last long prayer had now been said,  
 I thought my hour was come :  
 And, not because I felt afraid,  
 But, yearning for my plighted maid  
 And parents dear at home,  
 I did kneel down, and beg once more  
 My God to bring me safe ashore.

Just then, while prayer rekindled hope,  
 I saw a chest float past,  
 To which with many a coil of rope  
 I bound me safe and fast :  
 “ Lord, to Thy hands I now commend  
 My soul and body too,  
 For in the uttermost of the sea  
 Thy Spirit good can comfort me  
 Thine angel guide me through.”  
 Thus in resigned and trusting mood  
 I floated round where Robert stood.

“ The chest is large, it floateth high ;  
 ’Twill bear the child’s light weight,”  
 I cried aloud ; “ to live or die,  
 Dear Robert, share my fate ! ”  
 The skipper saw, and urged him sore,  
 Begging it might be so ;  
 But filial love had mastered fear,  
 I saw (his words I could not hear)



That Robert still said "No."  
And then he stretcht his arms to me,  
As if to embrace me o'er the sea,  
And I was forced to go.

A little moment on the deep  
I wished that I might die ;  
Even now that parting makes me weep ;  
And yet I know not why  
We mourn for those that fall asleep  
To wake beyond the sky,  
Whose mortal is for ever clothed  
With immortality :  
While we are uttering faithless moan,  
They stand in white before the throne ;  
And "Holy, Holy" cry.  
Could we but hear that perfect strain,  
Our tears would never flow again.

Adieu ! Adieu ! fair "Ocean Queen,"  
Thy latest voyage is o'er,  
A little hour, and thou art seen  
By mortal men no more.  
I floated, gazing still at him,  
The friend my soul loved best :  
As if beyond all thought of harm,  
He lay within his father's arm  
And nestled in his breast.  
Death had no power to spoil the charm  
Of that unwonted rest :  
And so they vanished in the gloom  
That closed about them like a tomb.

And I was left alone ! alone  
Upon the darkling main ;  
Sometimes all hope of life was gone,  
Then it revived again.  
And once methought I spied a sail  
And gathered all my strength to hail ;  
'Twas but the foamy billow ;  
No answer ! but the cruel gale  
That shrieked around my pillow,  
And seemed to say, " No help is nigh,  
Thy prayer is vain, despair and die."

But still I trusted in His love,  
And found my trust repaid  
With consolation from above  
And unexpected aid.  
I felt no more the chilling spray,  
Yet sleep it could not be ;  
I seemed to watch the earliest streak  
Of morning gleam across the lake  
Of distant Galilee ;  
I saw our dear Redeemer make  
A pathway o'er the sea,  
And mount a storm-tost vessel's side,  
And bid the voyagers' fear subside,  
And wind and wave " be still ;"  
Then billows bowed, and tempest died,  
Subservient to His Will ;  
And left the ship in peace to glide  
Beneath the sheltering hill.  
Awake, I cried, " Remember me,  
Good Jesu, Lord of air and sea."

I lay ; but lo ! no longer tied,  
As if in penal pain  
Condemned till day of doom to ride  
The storm steeds of the main.  
For God had all my need supplied,  
And turned my loss to gain !  
At early dawn a friendly crew  
Had succoured me half-dead,  
And brought me home ; and, mother, you  
And Ellen dear, and father too,  
Were kneeling round the bed,  
Offering in joyful, tearful mood  
Meet sacrifice of gratitude.

ELLEN.

But, William, you forgot to tell us how ill for many a  
week you lay,  
And how the pitiless wind and water had almost bruised  
your life away.

MOTHER.

And what a wonderful nurse was Ellen, and how her hand  
upon one's head  
Is better for bruises than all the physic of all the  
doctors—so William said.

ELLEN.

But, mother, dear, you know when people are ill they  
make such silly speeches.

WILLIAM.

Silly or wise, it is honest truth—your nursing cured me,  
and not the leeches.

## MOTHER.

O that dreadful, dreadful morning! Never until my  
dying day  
Shall I forget how the sailor came to tell us that William  
was cast away.

## FATHER.

Soon they brought us happier tidings : and yet I think  
more tears were shed,  
When we saw him so pale and corpse-like, almost risen  
again from the dead.

## FIRST KINSMAN.

Dearly I loved that little Robert—I am so sorry that he  
died,  
How sweet it would be to see him sitting here to-night at  
William's side.

## WILLIAM.

Dearer the Side where he is sitting, sweeter the Home his  
shelter now,  
A little while and we all shall see him—the martyr's  
coronal on his brow.

## SECOND KINSMAN.

Robert's father was very wicked, and yet so penitent he  
grew,  
I can't help thinking, as William told us, that he is  
forgiven and resting too. •

MOTHER.

We may not doubt, we may not doubt it : the tear of  
penitence is a gem  
That seals the deed of the sinner's pardon through Jesus  
born at Bethlehem.

FATHER.

Well said, wife ! for I was fast forgetting to-morrow is  
Christmas Day ;  
William's untimely, doleful story has driven our festival  
mirth away.

MOTHER.

Nay, but to speak to one another of His dear love who  
came from heaven,  
Purifies our Christmas feasting from every blemish of  
earthly leaven.

FATHER.

So, good night, and Christ be with ye ! Old time never  
gives us warning,  
He has stolen a march upon us ! See, already 'tis  
Christmas morning.

MOTHER.

Good night all ! and if William's story has filled our eyes  
with unwonted sorrow,  
Let it kindle a grateful spirit to sing to the Lord in church  
to-morrow.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]



## THE FAITHFUL PASTOR.<sup>1</sup>

*A BALLAD.*

**N**O a vision glides before me, beautiful exceedingly;  
I would tell of one whose story vibrates in the  
memory,  
Like harmonious music stealing o'er the soul on  
Holy Day,

Living in the hallowed feeling kindled ere it passed away,  
Which thro' many years of sorrow on the mindful ear will cast  
Prophecies of tearless morrow in sweet echoes of the Past.

Christ-like he in pure behaviour, Christ-like he in charity  
Lived, and died in Christ our Saviour when his years were  
thirty-three.

Kind and gentle was his bearing to the aged, sick, and poor ;  
Every day new troubles sharing brought him to the cottage door.  
Knowing well each strong temptation, pointing out each  
treacherous path,  
Oft his heart felt exhortation, spoken at the poor man's hearth,

<sup>1</sup> For the facts alluded to in this poem, see the "Life of the late R. A. Suckling," by the Rev. Isaac Williams.

Moved some bruised, sinking spirit from the depth, to raise his  
eyes

Up to Him whose perfect Merit healeth our infirmities.

Hear his earnest sermon stirring sinner vile and publican ;

See him leading home the erring as the holy only can ;

Like a brother many a sister he thro' penitential pain

(While a thoughtless world but hissed her) won to self-respect  
again.

Most of all he knew a pleasure in the children God had given,  
Jesus' lambs, entrusted treasure, washed, regenerate, forgiven,  
Dowered with the Spirit's measure, sanctified, and sealed for  
Heaven.

Upon such his sweet affection like a holy unction fell ;

They obeying the direction of the Priest they loved so well,

Grew around him and were savèd, walking stedfast in the truth,

Lads as bold as holy David, maidens sweet and pure as Ruth.

Where a little child lay dying he was bending o'er the bed,

Whispering of a land by crying, pain, and death unvisited ;

Saying—"Thou, dear boy, art going far from Satan's toils and  
harms."

Then he prayed, to Jesus hōwing, "Lord, embrace him in Thine  
arms,

Clothe him in Thy stainless vesture"—lastly on that drooping  
head

Laid his hands with loving gesture, blessing him in Jesus' stead.

He departing *felt* that Blessing, and upraised on elbow weak,

Clasped the Pastor's neck impressing dying kisses on his cheek.

Fails my hand—ye choirs immortal celebrate that spirit blest,

Tarrying at your heavenly Portal on the earthly shepherd's breast.

Happy both ! for that dear parting was the infant's latest pain ;

Pastor, dry the tear-drop starting—thou and he will meet again !

Ah, too soon ! For o'er him brightening, daily fell such gleams  
of grace,

That the poor said—"He is ripening to behold the Master's face."

Like sweet incense round his presence rose the influence of  
prayer ;

Where he came the rudest peasants seemed to breathe a purer  
air,

And the palace owned a pleasance which by nature dwelt not  
there.

So the sun at evening hour maketh every tongue confess,  
Every spirit feel the power of its passing loveliness.

Hear the ending of the story : he had counted " all things loss,"

Had he not whereof to glory? yea, but only in the Cross !

Cross-wise, like the Saviour, lying, thinking of His dying day,

He endured the pains of dying thro' the Cross his only stay.

No vain-glorious ostentation, empty boast of fight unwon,

Marred his meek assimilation to the Everlasting Son :

But a holy patience ever growing as his pains increase,

Word, and look, and motion showing Jesus' never-failing Peace.

Surely 'twas no dream bewildering, but a heavenly vision fair,

Bright-robed groups of little children thronging round about  
him there.

" Who are these ?" " Hast thou forgotten," Jesus answers,  
" servant dear,

Whom in Me thou hast begotten, loved, and tended year by year?

These are they thro' tribulation whom thy gentle guidance led,

Now they take their willing station watching o'er thy dying bed,

Waiting to conduct thy spirit, when the weary body dies,

To the Rest that they inherit—Rest with Me in Paradise."







### A TRUE INCIDENT.

**I** PASSED at eve the churchyard ground,  
Where sleep the village dead,  
And saw two children climb the bound  
That guards each simple cross and mound  
From wanton touch or tread.

They paused beside a new-made grave,  
As if intent on play ;  
And I, its sanctity to save,  
Had raised a threatening arm to wave  
The little ones away.

But when the elder maiden bent  
And, kneeling, kissed the sod,  
Remorseful on my way I went,  
And for the little orphans sent  
Heart-pleadings up to God.



## NATURE'S CATHEDRAL.

"This is none other than the House of God."



OUR Father Jacob, fleeing from the rage  
Of Esau and his fratricidal mood,  
Halted at night beneath the foliage  
Of an outspreading wood.

'Twas holy ground ; for God the Architect  
Had laid on teeming Nature His commands,  
"For glory and for beauty" to erect  
"A house not made with hands."

### THE NAVE AND ARCHES.

So almond-trees, with branches interlaced,  
Had built twelve arches exquisitely tall,  
Enwreathed with pink-white blossoms, as if graced  
For some high festival.

## THE PILLARS.

They rest on living pillars, stems that stand  
Front against front, to gleam and whiten soon,  
Like granite columns fresh from sculptor hand,  
Beneath the pendent moon.

## THE FLOOR.

She, slowly climbing, polishes, where light  
May pierce the roof of undulating shade,  
A tessellated pavement, malachite  
And marble white inlaid :

## THE FONT.

And sparkles on a fountain farther west,  
With basin lily-margined, and above  
Circles with silver in sequestered nest  
The iris of a dove.

## • THE SCREEN.

A branching vine, whose plumes of tender green  
Bow lowlier as the west wind waxes higher,  
Is interposing a transparent screen  
Across the eastern choir ;

## THE CRUCIFIX.

And twined around twin oaks on either side,  
And hanging from their leafy arch o'erhead,  
It holds on high, where Holy Rood should bide,  
Five clusters ruby-red ;

## THE ALTAR AND FRONTAL.

And eastward stands the Altar, where a cleft  
Distils sweet water, one primeval stone,  
With velvet moss and parasital weft  
Of wild flowers overgrown.

## THE SERVICE.

Incense is here and music ; for the breeze  
Is burdened with the breath of meadow bloom,  
And swings the silver censers of the trees,  
And scatters their perfume ;

## THE CHORISTERS.

Then harmonized, among the foliage dim,  
With bubbling fount and melody of birds,  
It whispers to High Heaven a vesper hymn  
That needs no human words.

## THE SANCTUARY ROOF.

And over all a dome, divinely blent  
With gold and azure, stretches up afar  
The boundless concave of the firmament.  
Enriched with many a star.

## THE PRESENCE.

Lo ! from the zenith, brighter than the sun,  
More tender than the moon's pale imagery,  
More purple than the bow when day is done,  
That paints the eastern sky,

A Radiance gorgeous, delicate, and warm  
Streams down, as if the sun, the moon, the bow  
Had each combined its own peculiar charm  
In superhuman glow !

O can it be a gleam of angel wings  
Outspread in adoration o'er the shrine,  
A living, heaven-high canopy, that brings  
A glory so divine ?

It crimsons all the cleft within the Rock,  
It turns to Blood the water where it ran,  
It rests upon the lowly Altar-block,  
Uniting God with man.





## HOPE.

"I should utterly have fainted, but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."—*Ps.* xxvii. 15.

**D**EATH'S arrows around me are flying,  
Death crumbles the earth that I tread,  
While I speed through the Land of the Dying,  
Passing on to the Land of the Dead—  
The region of Darkness and Dread.

Some heav'n-kindled Thought of the Poet  
From soul unto soul leapeth on,  
But the heart that would triumph to know it,  
Whence the lightning Promethean shone,  
Is wasted with sorrow—and gone.

I stand where in arches monastic  
Religion still holdeth her own :  
O wise master builder—O plastic  
Creator of Beauty from stone,  
In thè Crypt thou art lying alone.

While echoing Evensong lingers  
In sadness, or swells into mirth ;  
I know that the brain, and the fingers,  
That charmed the sweet strain to its birth,  
Are nothing but ashes and earth.

Where art thou, my brother brave-hearted?  
I yearn for the clasp of thy hand :  
Alas ! for the day when we parted,  
Alas ! for the Indian strand,  
And the mound in the far-away land !

Ah ! my spirit had utterly fainted,  
Weighed down by the horror and gloom,  
But that Hope,<sup>1</sup> like a flower untainted  
By the sickening breath of the tomb,  
Rose before me in beauty and bloom.

It enamelled the path of the weepers,  
It illumined the grave's grassy mound,  
It encircled the brow of the sleepers  
As they slept in their beds under ground  
That slumber so rigid and sound.

And it told of the Season appointed  
And the Jubilee-trump to be blown,  
When the King by His Father Anointed  
Will sit on the Great White Throne,  
And the Dead will come back to their own ;

Come back—and our eyes will behold them,  
Our lost ones, the dearest and best ;  
We shall hear their own voices, and fold them  
With laughter and tears to our breast—  
O hasten—sweet Sabbath of Rest !

<sup>1</sup> " Hope, their unfading flower."— *Christian Year*

Tho' we wept when we spake of that meeting  
On the verge of Death's shadowy main,  
'Twill but add "tender grace" to our greeting  
On the shore, where remembrance of pain  
Is like fragrance that followeth rain.

Then, brothers, do battle with sorrow,  
How desolate ever your way,  
The Night is far spent—and the morrow  
Is tinging the orient grey  
With glory which heralds the Day !

Pressing onward thro' dead and thro' dying,  
The living, the living are we ;  
True pilgrims, our souls are relying  
All the Love of our Father to see  
Unveiled in our own countree.

And the hope of our Mansion Immortal  
"In the Land of the Living" shall hold  
Our souls undismayed, when the portal  
Of *iron* shall slowly unfold :  
We enter, and lo ! it is *Gold*.

All hail to thee ! mystical flower,  
Best blossom of sorrow's dark rod,  
Thou hast changed by celestial power  
Each loathsome funeral sod  
Into garden-ground blessèd of God !





## THE POOR WISE MAN.

ECCLES. ix. 14, 15.

**A**N ancient king, with a mighty power,  
Assailed a city small,  
And threatened with rampart and rival tower  
The ill-defended wall :  
“Yield, and be slaves,” his challenge ran.  
Now there dwelt in the city a Poor Wise Man.

This Poor Wise Man deliverance wrought,  
Before their wondering eyes ;  
He by His Wisdom to folly brought  
The tactics of the wise ;  
He vanquished the foe ; He broke the ban !  
O how will they honour this Poor Wise Man ?

For His naked Breast was their shield in the strife,  
His Fearing calmed their fears ;  
His Dying resummoned their dead to life ;  
His Weeping wiped their tears !  
Thus courage accomplished Wisdom’s plan :  
O how will they honour this Poor Wise Man ?

Alas, when the day of His death came round,  
No eye with tears grew dim,  
The citizens all their pleasure found :  
Who cared to weep for Him ?  
By road and by rail the people ran,  
And none would remember that Poor Wise Man !

*Good Friday.*





## THE PRODIGAL'S OMISSION.

“ Make me as one of thy hired servants.”

**T**HE light within still faded, till I found  
Among the loathsome swine my fitting seat,  
And struggled with them on the miry ground  
For trampled husks that I was fain to eat.

Then the scales fell ! I watched at break of day  
The visions of my frenzied soul depart,  
And, like a messenger from home, a ray  
Of holy sunlight pleaded with my heart.

And when I knew myself of such a sire  
The darling son, companioning with swine,  
I flung away the husks of base desire ;  
Come life, or death, such food should not be mine.

I said, with breaking heart, “ I will arise,  
And stand, a beggar, at my father’s door ;  
It may be, when he sees my famished eyes,  
He will not let me hunger any more.

“ For he will call to mind a rosy face  
That beamed a kindlier radiance, if he smiled,  
When morn and eve I sought his calm embrace  
An innocent and tender-hearted child.

“ I will arise :—but, feed me though he may,  
An honoured son I never more can be ;  
‘ I am not worthy, father,’ I will say,  
‘ To be thy son,—but let me work for thee.’ ”

So I came home ; and fainting when I heard  
My father’s footstep, leant, I know not how,  
Upon his bosom : and he spake no word,  
But kissed my matted hair and heated brow.

“ O father, mine has been a sinful part,  
Unworthy of thy love,”—thus far I said ;  
But when I felt the yearning of his heart,  
And his sweet blessing o’er my drooping head ;

I could not ask the servile hireling’s lot,  
So tender the forgiveness I had won ;  
The thought conceived afar I uttered not,  
But sobb’d, “ My father,” and he said, “ My Son.”





## FORGIVENESS.

*A BALLAD.*



READ those words again," he said,  
And strangely moved was he ;  
" Read them again, and when I'm dead,  
On a wooden cross above my head  
Engraven let them be."

" Father, forgive them," Jesus cried,  
" They know not what they do "—  
Into his Being they seem'd to glide,  
A soul-refreshing dew.

He took his Bible from the shelf,  
The print was pale with age,  
And lo ! it opened of itself  
Upon that very page.

And then I noticed that it bore  
The marks of many years,  
And that its lines were blotted o'er  
With penitential tears.

“ I used to read the Book and pray ;  
But now my eyes are dim,  
I cannot read ; yet, night or day,  
These sacred words I love to say,  
Which brought my soul to Him.

“ I fain would tell a history  
Hath never yet been told ;  
What profit if it lie with me  
Forgotten 'neath the mould ?

“ But if you write it when I'm gone  
(I have not long to live),  
It may subdue some heart of stone,  
And humble it before His Throne,  
And teach it to forgive.

“ They say that scorn and hatred burn  
Cain's mark upon the brow !  
I was not always sad and stern  
As you behold me now.

“ I used to toil from morn to night,  
In a village near the sea ;  
But I was strong, my heart was light,  
And what was toil to me ?

“ For tho' I lost my dear young wife  
Full fourteen years before,  
I had one child—my very life :  
Her mother's name she bore,

“ And eyes, and hair, and voice ; and when  
My Alice spake or smiled ;  
It seemed the mother lived again  
In this her only child.

“ And rich and poor, and great and small,  
Had some kind word for her ;  
She tamed the rudest of them all,  
She was so gentle, sir.

“ The parson asked one day, and smiled,  
What made my heart so light ;  
I said it was my own sweet child,  
With her sunny hair, and her voice so mild,  
And her laugh so merry and bright.

“ My comrades oft agreed to roam  
To fair or revelry ;  
I told them I had one at home  
Was waiting then for me,  
Waiting to pour, when I should come,  
The cup of fragrant tea.

“ How bright the winter logs would burn,  
While we in chimney-nook,  
Together verse and verse in turn  
Read chapters from the Book.

“ I would at church, among the choir,  
You, sir, had heard her voice,  
Had heard her chant with holy fire  
Or swell the solemn anthem higher ;  
It made my soul rejoice !

“ Ah ! now sometimes at midnight dreary,  
A voice and tone I know,  
The wailing of a miserere  
Around the house doth go ;

“ And then I pray for Christ’s dear grace  
That she will come to me,  
And leave her quiet resting-place  
In the churchyard by the sea,  
That ere I die her angel face  
These aged eyes may see.

“ My words are wild : good sir, forgive  
A father’s maddening pain,  
My sufferings, I do believe,  
Have somewhat warped my brain,  
And in telling the tale I seem to live  
The dear old life again.

\* \* \* \*

“ A shipwreck ! ’Midst the tempest’s breath  
The life-boat cleaves the wave ;  
Our hearts are stout, but scarce from death  
One single soul we save.

“ I rescued one from surges rude  
(For I could dive and swim) ;  
I brought him home, and warmed his blood,  
And chafed the deadened limb ;  
Ah ! well he paid for the shelter and food  
Which I bestowed on him !



“ He lived ; and still he lingered by  
Our cottage near the sea :  
His gentle speech, and bearing high,  
Soon won my child and me.

“ And oft at eve upon the sands,  
While Alice walked between,  
He told us tales of foreign lands,  
And marvels he had seen,  
Of pirate-hordes and robber-bands ;  
And showed upon his head and hands  
Where sabre-cuts had been.

\* \* \* \*

“ My work was done : I sought my cot,  
The hearth was cold and bare !  
‘ Why, Alice dear, have you forgot——’  
But Alice was not there.

“ I drove the shuddering fear away,  
And soon the bright blaze shone ;  
I listened—then aloud did say,  
‘ She’s to the village gone :  
She found the sun too hot to-day,  
She will be here anon.’

“ And then the fear returned again,  
‘ She’s gone for evermore !’  
I went and looked along the lane  
Which passed our cottage door.

“ I could not sit—I could not wait—  
My heart beat fast with woe :  
I hastened through the garden-gate :  
‘ I’ll to the village go  
And bring her home—it grows quite late.  
Where can she linger so ? ’

“ I walked at first : my steps grew fast—  
I ran with all my might,  
And prayed, at every turn I past,  
That she might come in sight.  
The shops’ reflecting panes at last  
Showed that my face was white.

“ She had not been there all that day,  
I listened with a groan ;  
‘ The Stranger ? ’ I found heart to say—  
The Stranger, too, was gone.  
O sir, I weep, as well I may,  
But then my heart was stone.

“ I hastened home in wild despair,  
And knew not how nor why ;  
The neighbours all were gathered there,  
And not a cheek was dry :  
But I could only stand and glare  
With red and tearless eye.

“ O sir, that night—that fearful night !  
I wandered to and fro,  
And up and down, like troubled sprite,  
Up-stairs and down below,

“ Pacing ever up and down,  
And pacing to and fro,  
With fiendish thoughts, and never a light  
From Heav'n to soothe my woe.

“ And then I vowed a wicked vow,  
May the good Lord forgive !  
With such a heart I marvel how  
He suffered me to live.

“ I vowed to slay him and his race  
(It shames my tongue to tell),  
Or at the Judgment face to face  
To cast him out of Heaven's grace  
And drag him down to hell.

“ And then I recollect no more :  
'They tell me I was mad,  
And wandering along the shore,  
With all the strength I had,  
Cried ' Alice ! Alice ! ' evermore  
In tones now fierce, now sad.

“ And when I next awoke to sense,  
Within a gloomy cell  
I lay, in shackled impotence,  
With chain and manacle.

“ And one, an aged priest, was there  
With peaceful holy look,  
And in his hand, O sir, he bare  
My own—this very Book  
Which I so often read with her  
Within the chimney-nook.

## SACRED POEMS.

“ I snatched the book and read straightway  
With dark remorseless eye  
The story of the Judgment-day,  
And what the Almighty King will say  
To souls condemned to die.

“ But when I closed the book again  
And looked at him once more,  
I saw a cloud of grief and pain  
I had not seen before.

“ He took my hand : ‘ Poor man, poor man,  
Thy hair has turned to grey ;  
Thy form is bent, thy cheek is wan ;  
Oh, cast such thoughts away !  
Extend forgiveness while you can,  
And seek it while you may.’

“ I said : ‘ The soul is stern and strong  
Tho’ flesh and blood decay,  
I never *will* forgive that wrong—  
How long, O Righteous God, how long  
Before the Judgment-day ?’

“ He gently took the Book, and then  
(God bless him evermore !)  
He read about the Nazarene,  
And all the woe He bore,  
For us the sinful sons of men,  
On Palestina’s shore.

“ How on His guiltless head was laid  
 The guilt of such as I ;  
 How coward dread of suffering made  
 His dearest friends deny ;  
 How one who ate of His own Bread,  
 For gain his loving Lord betrayed,  
 And gave Him up to die ;

“ And how when He was crucified,  
 His feet and hands pierced thro’,  
 He in the midst—on either side  
 The malefactors two—  
 ‘ Father, forgive them,’ Jesus cried,  
 ‘ They know not what they do.’

‘ Victorious Cross ! thy melting power  
 Took my hard heart away.  
 I knelt upon the dungeon floor,  
 And I could *weep* and *pray*—  
 I prayed for *him*—O blessed hour,  
 I had never shed *one tear* before,  
 Since Alice went away !

“ Another fortnight, and I stood  
 A broken man—but free ;  
 And wandered back in lowly mood  
 To my cottage near the sea.  
 I said, ‘ The Lord is very good :  
 She *may* come back to me !’

“ And, sir, she came one stormy night :  
 I started up and said,  
 Her features were so ghastly white,  
 ‘ O Alice, thou art dead.’

“She was no ghost,—I heard her speak  
Amid the tempest’s din ;  
‘Father,’ she said, in accents weak,  
With quivering lip and pallid cheek,  
‘Dear father, take me in.’

“‘Alice ! thank God, that thou art come,  
That thou art come at last ;  
I’ve waited for thee, dear, at home,  
Well-nigh this twelvemonth past !  
O say thou never again wilt roam :’  
In my arms I held her fast.

“‘See—every night, my wandering lamb,  
I set thy cup for thee,  
Thy cup and chair—the very same,  
Just where it used to be.

“‘My precious child—O do not weep !  
The past—nay, let it go !  
Let it lie buried fathom-deep  
With all its weight of woe.

“‘Yes—yes, I suffered for a while ;  
Thou too hast borne much pain.  
Hush, darling, let me see the smile—  
All will be well again.’

“She smiled. Ah ! not the smile of old—  
But thro’ my heart it went,  
As plain as if her tongue had told—  
I construed all it meant !

“ Dread confirmation of the fear  
I read in cheek and eye :  
She had not long to tarry here,  
She sought a place to die !

“ That night I watched beside her bed  
The while my darling slept,  
And bowed the knee and worshippèd  
And prayed for pardon on her head,  
‘Tis better—better so,’ I said,  
And thanked my God, and wept.

“ Again within the chimney-nook,  
Reclining day by day,  
She used to read this Holy Book—  
To read the Book and pray.

“ To read about the Magdalene,  
Her tearful, loving woe,  
And how the scarlet of her sin  
Became as white as snow.

“ Like little child she all one day  
Had sat upon my knee ;  
Had said she thought she heard Him say,  
‘ Lo ! I have pardoned thee.’  
Her head upon my bosom lay,  
And so her spirit passed away—  
She passed away from me.

“ The linnet had not built its nest  
When she came back to me,  
She had white roses on her breast  
When we laid her in her lowly rest,  
In the churchyard near the sea.”



## THE SEVEN STARS.

“ He had in his right hand seven stars.”—*Apocalypse* i. 16.



VISION of sweet comfort sent from heaven  
Entranced the spirit of the Evangelist,  
Who saw the Angels of the Churches seven  
Like Pleiads glitter in the Hand of Christ!

From that High Seat of safety and of glory—  
The fostering Hand of Jesus throned above—  
'Tis theirs to utter Calvary's wonder-story,  
And show the bleeding Stigma of His love;

To sound, like heralds, from their vantage station  
Where War extends his desolating rod,  
Where peoples join in peaceful federation,  
“The glory” and “the handiwork” of God.\*

Shine on! with changeless light the faithful guiding  
Thro' blinding mists that flit athwart the land,  
List to no tempter—fear no foeman's chiding;  
So none shall pluck you from that sheltering Hand! †

\* Ps. xix. 1, 4.

† St. John x. 28.



None, save your own base will—if haply scorning  
The hidden glories of your high estate,  
Ye sully, like th' apostate son of Morning,\*  
The fires of heaven with flames of lust and hate.

Wait, watch, illumine ! nor deem your mission ended,  
Till gilding all the azure of your night,†  
The Day breaks—and your lesser rays are blended  
And lost in streams of Uncreated Light.

Then the fair‡ Moon and all her stars shall render  
Eternal homage to their Central Sun,  
And glow with sheen more radiant and tender,<sup>°</sup>  
Reflected from the happy souls they § won.

\* Is. xiv. 12.

† Gen. i. 16.

‡ Cant. vi. 10.

§ Dan. xii. 3.





## NIGHT THOUGHTS.

**W**HEN Evensong was ended,  
And sermon and hymn were o'er,  
The priest was hastening homeward  
Across the darkened moor ;

From the Mission Chapel homeward :  
But his heart was heavy as lead,  
For the bark of the Puritan ban-dog  
Had scattered the flock that he fed.

For years he had striven to win them  
To reverence, faith, and prayer ;  
But the Popery-tocsin had sounded,  
And the seats of his Chapel were bare.

So his heart was heavy within him,  
By anger and pity tossed,  
And he turned to his God, like Elias,  
And mourned for his labour lost.

And marvelled that God Almighty  
Spake not from yon cloudy throne,  
To silence the mad blasphemer,  
And comfort the souls of his own.

So he gazed on the eastern horizon,  
And straightway saw arise,  
Like a lurid orb of crimson,  
Suspended from the skies,

The moon—a blood-red portent !  
And he cried in ecstatic mood ;  
“ The sun is turned into darkness,  
The moon is turned into blood ! ”

Thus flashed from the height of heaven,  
That old prophetic scroll  
Was blazoned by angel fingers  
On the wall of his inmost soul :

And he read the interpretation,  
And knew that it was sent,  
A token from God his Saviour,  
To rebuke his discontent.

“ Thou art the Sun, O Master,  
And Thine the Beauty and Glow ;  
The moon, with a borrowed radiance,  
Is the sign of Thy Church below.

“ Our Sun was turned into darkness,  
And straightway from the Rood  
Marched forth the army of Martyrs—  
The Moon was turned into blood.

“ And now once more the gloaming  
Of unbelief is begun ;  
And human imaginations  
Are quenching the Light of our Sun.

“ The Light that enlighteneth all men  
Is shrouded with impious scoff ;  
So their light is turned into darkness,  
And great is the darkness thereof !

“ What marvel, when Jesu’s Glory  
Is scorned and rejected again,  
If the band of His faithful servants  
Be evil-entreated and slain ?

“ They are coming—they are coming—  
Those anti-Christian days,  
When the snow-white chism must redden  
In persecution’s blaze ;

“ And once more, ere the Æon closes,  
Will Joel’s word hold good,  
‘ The sun shall be turned into darkness,  
And the moon shall be turned into blood.’ ”



## THE LAST WORDS OF DAVID.

A PARAPHRASE OF 2 SAM. xxiii. 1-5.

**T**HESE are the last words of David : this is the  
last of his lays ;  
Ere the music ceased for ever, ere the harp  
from his fingers fell ;  
David the son of Jesse, whom Heaven delighted to raise,  
David, Jehovah's Anointed, sweet singer of Israël.

In the passionless calm of dying, as I turn my face to  
the wall,  
The scenes of my life are repeated, and the many  
songs I sung ;  
And I marvel at so much mercy, for even after my fall  
“ The Spirit of God spake by me, His Word was in my  
tongue.”

I see a rock in the desert, and sheep reposing around,  
And myself an innocent stripling, reclining beneath the  
shade ;

Hush ! 'tis the olden warning : there is thunder in the  
 sound ;  
 But *that* is only the echo my sinful life has made.

The Voice, as in youth I heard It, was awful, but very  
 sweet,  
 Not to be heard with the ear, but like a pulsation  
 within :

*“ He that ruleth a kingdom, and sits on the judgment-seat,  
 Must rule in the fear of Fehovah, abhorring injustice  
 and sin.*

*And he shall be bright as the morning that looks from the  
 Eastern hill,  
 Cloudless, and chaseth the flying shadows across the plain :  
 And His presence like the odours that breathing flowers  
 distil,  
 When the tender grass-spires glisten in sunshine after the  
 rain.”*

But the warning was all unheeded ; the glory can never  
 be mine ;  
 I and my house have sinned : I am neither pure nor  
 just ;  
 My life was lurid and stormy, and cloudy my life's decline,  
 O lay me low, my children, and let me die in the dust.

And yet I trust I'm forgiven, and the Covenant standeth  
 fast ;  
*“ Thy Throne shall endure for ever, Thy Sceptre shall  
 not depart :”*

What this may mean I know not, but He will fulfil it at  
last,  
And the yearning anticipation upholdeth my failing  
heart.

\* \* \* \* \*

Through the vista of years I see Him, my Saviour and  
yet my Son,  
And the snow of his vesture is sullied by never a guilty  
stain ;  
Like dawn outspread on the mountains, He reigneth the  
Peerless One,  
And His grace illumines the nations like sunshine after  
the rain.





## A CHILD'S QUESTIONS.

“ABIIT NON OBIIT : PRÆIIT NON PERIIT.”

**H**ERE, mother, let us take our seat,  
This sunny morn in May.  
I love to hear the lambkins bleat,  
And watch them at their play.

“ And will they always gambol so,  
And always leap and run,  
With fleecé that shines like winter snow  
Beneath the happy sun ?

“ They seem to talk in varied tone  
Of question or command ;  
Have they a language of their own  
I cannot understand ?

“ That pretty lamb, how sportively  
It seeks its parent ewe ;  
I wonder if it feels what I,  
Dear mother, feel for you ?



“ The shepherd now, with crook in hand,  
Is opening yonder door ;  
It leads into a pasture-land  
I never saw before.

“ How smooth those upland meadows seem !  
How sweet the scent of limes !  
'Tis very like a golden dream  
That comes to me sometimes.

“ What mass of bloom those chestnuts show,  
The joy of humming bees ;  
What cooling breezes seem to go  
Athwart the waving trees.

“ What silver brooklets fertilise  
The green untrodden grass,  
And soften with prismatic dyes  
The sunbeams as they pass.

“ The merry birds are carolling  
Among those bowers of bliss ;  
Oh, mother, when the angels sing,  
Is it more sweet than this ?

“ Right glad the woolly flock will be  
To pass that iron gate ;  
These lower slopes seem dull to me,  
And almost desolate.

“ But see, the sheep are all afraid ;  
They crowd with anxious look,  
And strive on all sides to evade  
The shepherd's gentle crook.

“ Could they but view those happy fields,  
And hear the waters glide,  
Such joys that bright enclosure yields,  
They could not turn aside.

“ At length they enter, and are hid :  
Already some are gone :  
Why, mother, does the Shepherd bid  
Them pass the gate alone ?

“ See what a little lamb comes next !  
But he is forced to go :  
The ‘ mother sheep ’ looks sore perplex,  
And rushes to and fro.

“ Then others quickly come between,  
And while she stands in doubt,  
Her little lamb is no more seen,  
And she is left without.

“ Poor mother sheep ! I hear her voice  
Of lamentation rise ;  
How can her little one rejoice  
If he can hear her cries ?

“ But wherefore comes he not again  
Through that mysterious door,  
To soothe his bleating mother’s pain,  
And bid her weep no more ?

“ Oh, can it be his brighter lot  
So occupies his mind  
That he, alas ! remembers not  
The dam he left behind ?

“ Dear mother, should *I* chance to come,  
While you were forced to stay,  
To such a new and happy home,  
I could not laugh or play ;

“ I could not, like that silly sheep,  
Bird, brook, or flower enjoy,  
For I should hear my mother weep,  
Lamenting for her boy.

“ And I would ask that Shepherd true,  
So gentle he appears,  
To ope' the gate and let me through,  
To wipe my mother's tears.”

\* \* \* \*

Alas, before a single week  
Fulfilled its rapid round,  
The Shepherd called that child to seek  
The higher pasture-ground.

He vanished from his mother's sight,  
Her hope for future years,  
And many a weary, weary night  
Her couch was wet with tears.


But never more, ah, never more,  
She saw by night or day,  
Her pretty one repass *that door*,  
To wipe her tears away.



## THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN.

PROV. xxxi.

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1.  ISE the Saws and full of meaning, Saws remembered long and well,  
Which his mother, sage in maxims, spake unto King Lemuel.

\* \* \* \* \*

10. Who can find a virtuous woman, he has won a priceless gem,  
Richer than the glowing rubies in a monarch's diadem !
11. For her husband's heart may trust her, that, eschewing wordy  
strife,
12. She will be a faithful partner and the blessing of his life.
15. In the dawning, ere the busy sun hath risen, riseth she,
17. Strength for girdle claspeth round her, and for bracelets Industry ;  
Then she dealeth equal portions, doles of corn and wine and oil  
To her servants and her maidens, and to all their daily toil ;
26. Words of wisdom, words of kindness flow like honey from her  
tongue,
27. While she watches well her household, checking idleness and  
wrong.

13. Wool she cardeth, flax she spinneth, working deftly with her hands ;  
14. Seeketh, like a stately vessel, sustenance from distant lands ;  
16. Reapeth fruit of all her labours ; in her wisdom buys a field,  
And at harvest plucks the clusters which her ample vineyards yield.  
18. Thus rejoicing in her bargain she re-seeks her secret bower ;  
19. Plies the spindle, plies the distaff, trims the lamp at midnight hour,  
20. Weaving garments for the naked, and the needy on her lands ;  
Warming weary hearts with comfort when she stretcheth forth her  
hands ;  
21. Thread she twines with nimble fingers, knitting coats and scarlet  
hose,  
Meet protection for her household ere the fall of winter snows ;  
23. For her husband noble raiment, costly ornaments of state,  
Praised by all men when he sitteth with his equals in the gate ;  
24. Ever and anon she frameth girdles of a rich device,  
Many-folded, and of linen rare and precious merchandise ;  
22. For herself embroidered garments wrought in purflèd tapestry,  
Eastern silk and Tyrian purple, pleasing to her husband's eye ;  
25. But a fairer grace than raiment clothes her now and evermore,  
Loving wife, discerning mistress, fostering mother of the poor !  
28. Lo ! her children call her blessèd, moulded by her blameless life,  
And her husband's spirit glories in his true and faithful wife :  
29. Saying : " Many other daughters wise and virtuous stand confest,  
Thou beyond all other women art most virtuous, wisest, best !  
30. Favour is a faithless dower, Beauty fadeth soon away ;  
Holy women, wives and mothers, who are magnified as they ?  
31. All thy handiwork remaining shall perpetuate the fame  
Of ' the Good and Virtuous Woman '—this thine everlasting name."





## 'THE ANGELS' TALE.

*A BALLAD.*

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PART I.—SELF-WILL.

“ We know not what we should pray for.”

**D**YING she lay, passing away  
With the passing of the night :  
Angels three, waiting were we  
To carry her soul to the Light.

At the foot, at the head of her little bed  
We listened for the token,  
The word of release, “ Depart in peace,”  
By the Mouth of God to be spoken.

Dreamily smiled the dying child,  
For her eyes were open to see  
Three angels of love bending down from above,  
And cheerily back smiled we ;

And we soothed her pain with a sweet refrain  
From the children's Paradise.  
But her mother knelt there : it was hard to bear  
The passionate gleam of her eyes !

Worn were her knees with litanies,  
And still she wrestled on,  
All night, all day, she would pray, pray, pray,  
With never, "Thy will be done."

Now shrill and high in her agony,  
And now in an undertone,  
"Great God, spare, spare ;" till the dread despair  
Of her cry went up to the Throne.

For the Master knows all human woes  
And the anguish of every tear,  
And He thought of His prayer in the garden there,  
And His sorrowful mother so dear.

And ere long we heard His pitying Word  
Soft as the snow-flakes fall,  
While we bowed to the ground at the solemn sound,  
At the voice of the Lord of All.

"Fond heart, believe Me ;  
Wild heart, be still ;  
Trust Me a little,  
Yield to My will.  
Lend Me thy sweet one,  
My Love is best ;  
Think of her bright home,  
Think of her rest.

Dark though the world be,  
 Love rules on high ;  
 Whoso believeth  
 Never shall die."

For a little space at the message of Grace  
 She wept—her brow grew mild :  
 Till again she gazed on the film that glazed  
 The sweet blue eyes of her child.

Ah, then once more on the chamber floor  
 She urged her rebellious prayer,  
 Till we shuddered again at the wild refrain,  
 "Spare her, Great God, O spare !

"Let come what will—be it good, be it ill—  
 For the sake of Thy dear Son,  
 Save, O save, from the cold damp grave,  
 My darling—my only one !"

The death-film fell from the sweet, blue eyes,  
 The glory fled from the morning skies,  
 Closed were the portals of Paradise.  
 And then a Voice—the Voice we know—  
 A voice of pity, a wail of woe :  
 "Ascend, and leave the babe below."

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PART II.—"THY WILL BE DONE."

Pure was the rime of her childhood's prime,  
 And angels came down to bless her ;  
 But it melted away when the garish day  
 Of pleasure began to caress her.



Her beauty so bright to the outward sight  
Was the mask of dissembled sin ;  
A sepulchre fair, but the dead was there,  
And the slime of the serpent within.

We welcome home many souls that roam  
When the signal is past to rejoice ;  
And right gladly we bring the best robe and the ring  
At the sound of the pardoning Voice.

But no warrant is given to the choirs of heaven  
To waken their harps of gold  
For one who is scorning the Shepherd's warning  
Afar from the heavenly fold.

See where she lies with hard cold eyes,  
Her life-sand is well-nigh run,  
Yet never a prayer will tremble there  
On the lips of the sinful one.

“ Cease, mother, to read what I cannot heed,  
The story you taught me before,  
If a heaven there be, it is shut against me,  
For ever and evermore.

“ Twin shapes of dread lurk round my bed,  
No guardian angels they,  
But spirits unblest to realms of unrest  
Impatient to drag me away.”

Less bitter the moan of Rachel <sup>1</sup> lone  
Bewailing her infants slain ;  
Or the cry that sped from the sackcloth-bed  
Of Rizpah <sup>2</sup> over the plain,

<sup>1</sup> Jer. xxxi. 15.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Sam. xxi. 10.

When pitying night had hid the sight  
Of gibbet and of chain,  
The vile disgrace of the royal race,  
And her murdered offspring twain.

Less cruel the throe of Ægyptia's<sup>1</sup> woe  
When her firstling bloom lay dead,  
Than the poison smart of remorse in the heart  
Of the reader beside that bed.

“ Ah, selfish heart that would not part  
With its idol at Mercy's call !  
Ah, faithless fear that bound her here  
To sin, and suffer, and fall !

“ Would God she had died ere she sipped the tide  
Of passion's poisoned water ;  
And now that I in her place might die—  
My daughter—O my daughter ! ”

No hope ? O Thou all-pitying Son,  
Boundless the Grace Thy Blood has won :  
Thy Will is Love : Thy Will be done !

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii. 30.





## RUTH.

A SACRED IDYLL OF HARVEST-TIDE.

---

"Ruth amid the golden corn."—LONGFELLOW.

"She broke out in praise

"To God who helped her in her widowhood."

TENNYSON.

### I.

**I**N the great famine, when the Judges ruled,  
A man of Bethlehem-judah left the land,  
Impatient of the drought,—Elimelech,  
He with his wife, Naomi, and two sons,  
Mahlon and Chilion,—and long sojourned  
In Moab, where he died; and then the lads  
Took wives of Moab's daughters: Orpah one,  
The other Ruth. Soon after they too died;  
And thus Naomi stood bereft of all,—  
Husband and children gone. Then she arose  
To leave the land of Moab, and to seek  
Her native fields again, and issued forth,  
The women with her, one on either hand.  
Some way they walked in silence; then she paused,

And said : " For me ye shall not leave your kin ;  
Let each find shelter in her mother's home ;  
And Israel's God deal kindly with you both,  
As ye have dealt with me and with the dead.  
For you a brighter future yet may smile,  
And little children play around your knees :  
Farewell, I go alone : the hand of God  
Is raised against me."

Thus she spake, and kissed  
Both Ruth and Orpah, and the women three  
Wept long together, thinking of the dead.

Then Orpah, after much entreaty, kissed  
Naomi once again, and so went back  
To Moab, and her parents and their gods ;  
But Ruth clave to her, and with clasped hands,  
" Entreat me not," she cried, " to go away  
And leave thee in thy lonely widowhood :  
For whither thou art going, I will go ;  
And where thou lodgest, there I too will lodge ;  
Thy people shall be mine ; thy God my God ;  
And where at length thou diest, I will die,  
And share one grave, mingling my dust with thine.  
The Lord do so to me, and more—yea, add  
Woe unto woe—if any hand but Death's  
Shall pluck me from thee." Thus did Ruth prevail.

So they two went together, till they came  
To Bethlehem, Naomi's ancient home.  
But lo ! they knew her not, so bowed her form,  
Her face so seamed with trouble ; and they said,  
In pity and amazement, " Is it she ?—

Is this Naomi?" whispering as she passed.  
She raised her head, and said: "Ah, call me not  
Naomi (which is pleasant), O my friends,  
But call me Mara (bitter); for the Lord  
Hath made me drink a cup of bitterness.  
I wandered forth when all the fields were bare,  
But I was rich in husband and in sons;  
Now I return, the land with harvest smiles,  
And I alone am like a barren field."

## II.

So Ruth the Moabite comforted  
The sorrowing widow in her low estate,  
And when their store was failing fast, she said:  
"It is the time of harvest: let me go  
And glean the ears of corn where I may find  
Some gentle heart that will not say me nay."  
And when Naomi gave her leave she went,  
And knowing not the law of Love Divine  
That Moses gave, "Let no man glean his field,  
But leave it for the stranger and the poor,"  
She begged of favour what was hers of right,  
And gleaned among the sheaves from dewy morn  
Till the hot sun rode monarch of the sky,  
Following the reapers; then a little space  
She rested in the tent; but soon again  
Went forth to glean, until the noontide sun  
Beheld her bending still among the sheaves;  
Nor knew she that the owner of the field  
Was Boaz, kinsman of Elimelech,  
A mighty man of substance in the land.

Before mid-day he came from Bethlehem,  
And stood among his reapers while they reaped,  
And said, "The Lord be with you!" One and all  
Gave him obeisance meet (for courtesy  
Meets with its like), and bade God bless him too.  
Then seeing Ruth, he asked, "Whose damsel this?"  
And soon a servant told him all he knew :  
"That this was Ruth, the Moabitish girl,  
Who for Naomi's sake had left her home ;  
How, knowing not the gleaner's privilege,  
She humbly begged to glean among the sheaves ;  
And how from early morn, with diligence  
Following the reapers, she had toiled till then,  
Save that erewhile she sought beneath the tent  
Some brief repose, but only to renew  
Her pious toil, until the noontide sun  
Had found her bending still among the sheaves."  
He went and stood beside her, and his heart  
Yearned for his kindred, while he kindly said :  
"Hear me, my daughter : Go not from my field,  
But follow still my maidens where they reap.  
Fear not my young men, for I charge them now  
That they forbear by rude licentious mirth  
To vex thy gentle spirit. Go not hence :  
And when the noontide sun shall parch thy brow,  
Go quaff the cooling draught my reapers share."

But she, confounded at the kindly tone  
(For strangers hear few words of gentleness),  
Fell down in grateful homage at his feet,  
Her country's custom ; then, with faltering breath,  
"Wherefore, my lord, such favour shown to me,  
A stranger woman, and in face and speech

Unlike the maids of favoured Israel?"  
"No stranger, Ruth," he said, "for well I know  
Thy kindness to Naomi since the day  
Thy husband died, and how for love of her,  
Leaving thy father and thy mother and  
Thy native country, thou art come to us,  
A people all unknown to thee before.  
The Lord, beneath Whose wings, abandoning  
The gods of Moab, thou hast fled for aid,  
Requite thy piety a hundredfold."  
And then in courteous phrase he bade her sit  
I' the midst, and share the harvesters' repast,  
And gave her parchèd corn and homely wine,  
An honourable portion ; so she ate  
And drank, then rose to glean again till dusk,  
Gathering great spoils of bearded barley-ears,  
For Boaz bade his servants go by stealth,  
And scatter, where the damsel's eye would light,  
Large handfuls taken from the bursting sheaves.  
And when the night-cloud fell she threshed it out,  
And found that she had gathered grain enough  
To furnish forth their frugal board with bread  
For five whole days : thus God had prospered her.

Then scarcely bending 'neath the lightened load,  
With steps responsive to her joyful heart,  
She glided homeward through the darkening streets.  
And when Naomi poured upon the floor  
The heap of grain, and knew that she had wrought  
In Boaz' field, she gave loud thanks to God,  
And blessed the man who had compassion on  
The living, and showed kindness to the dead.  
"The man is near of kin to us," she said,

“One of the twain that may redeem our land.”  
Then answered Ruth : “Moreover, he enjoined  
That I should gather daily doles of grain,  
Following his reapers, till the fields are reaped  
And all the harvest garnered.” She replied,  
“’Tis well, my daughter ; what he bade thee, do.”

So while the pale gold plots of barley fell,  
And while the sickle glittered in the wheat,  
The Moabites gleaned among the sheaves,  
Following the reapers till the fields were reaped  
And all the harvest safely gathered in.

## III.

There was an ancient law in Israel,  
If one died childless, that his next of kin  
Should take the widow and preserve his name ;  
And if the heritage were pledged or sold,  
He should redeem it : this Naomi knew,  
And, harvest ended, calling Ruth, she said :  
“ My daughter, shall I hug a bootless grief,  
Nor care to find a peaceful home for thee ?  
That were an ill requital of thy love ;  
Do therefore my behest. Thou knowest well  
That Boaz is our kinsman, and should do  
A kinsman’s part to thee and to the dead.  
To-night he winnoweth barley in the barn ;  
Go, therefore : bide the time : and when his heart  
Is merry, gazing on the heaps of corn,  
And he has risen sated from the feast  
To seek repose, approach, and lay thee down  
In silence at his feet, and wait the end.”



But Ruth was inly troubled, and her blood  
Soon startled from its even flow by dread  
Of doing aught unwomanly, suffused  
Her cheek with crimson flush, then left it pale,  
And fled as seeking counsel from her heart ;  
Yet, being meek, she dared not disobey  
Naomi's will, so promised all she wished.

When night came on, she sought the granary  
With failing heart that feared to do amiss  
And mar the honest lustre of her name ;  
But filial love and duty mastered fear  
And strengthened her resolve to execute  
Naomi's will—the Will of God to her.

Darkling she stood, and veiled from head to foot,  
Biding her time, until she saw the man  
Rise sated from the harvest feast, his heart  
Merry within him (for he gazed around  
With brightening eye on heaps of golden corn) ;  
Then seeking rest, at peace with all the world,  
Smile as he slumbered on the yielding grain.  
Him Ruth approached, and softly laid her down  
Beside his feet, and only heard the sound  
Of measured breathing and her own loud heart ;  
The bright beams of the harvest moon poured in,  
And she slept not, and all the land was still.

At midnight he awoke with sudden start ;  
And conscious of a presence where he lay,  
Listened with bated breath ; but all was still ;  
Then, rising on his elbow, was aware  
Of a veiled figure lying motionless

Beneath the moonlight, pure, ethereal.  
"Who art thou?" and a trembling voice replied,  
"Thy handmaid Ruth;" and then in fainter tone,  
Remembering all Naomi bade her say,  
"I pray thee spread thy garment over me,  
And chide me not, for thou art near of kin."

Then Boaz cried in haste, "Heav'n bless thee, Ruth,  
My daughter, now as ever kind to me!  
While others of thine equals meditate  
On marriage feasts and youthful bridegroom, thou,  
Preferring others' weal to selfish bliss,  
Art loyal still to thine adopted kin.  
Fear not the tongue of slander thro' this deed,  
Naomi's bidding; for our city knows  
That thou art wise and chaste beyond reproach;  
And future generations shall repeat  
How bravely thou hast pleaded for the dead.  
'Tis true, I am thy kinsman; but there lives  
Another nearer still in blood than I:  
If he refuse to do a kinsman's part,  
How gladly will I claim thee! God above,  
Who hears us both, be witness of my words.  
And now lie down again and calm thy breast  
With needful sleep, the sleep of innocence."  
She, for his words breathed truth, in simple trust  
Lay down again where she had lain before,  
And slept securely till the moon went down  
And slanting sunbeams roused her and the birds  
Twittering beneath the eaves: then she arose,  
And waited with Naomi for the end.

## IV.

Nor waited long : for when the sun was high,  
Sat Boaz in the Gate of Bethlehem,  
Until he saw the man of whom he spake  
Pass through (his daily wont) to till his farm  
Without the Gate. "Ho ! such an one," he cried,  
"Sit down and hear me ; it concerns thee much :"  
Then called ten Elders of the city, men  
Wise and of good report, and bade them sit.  
They sat attentive, five on either side,  
While Boaz looked his kinsman in the face,  
And, scorning labyrinths of winding words,  
Without preamble uttered all his mind.  
"Naomi, now returned from Moab, sells  
A plot of ground that was Elimelech's ;  
To thee as next of kin belongs the right  
To buy it and redeem thine heritage.  
If thou wilt buy this land, redeem it now  
Before the Elders sitting in the Gate.  
If thou wilt not redeem it, tell me straight,  
For after thee I am the next of kin."  
He said, "I will redeem." Boaz replied,  
"Whoso shall buy this land must take to wife  
The Moabitess Ruth, wife of the dead,  
And raise up seed on his inheritance."  
The kinsman answered, "I will not redeem ;  
I may not mar mine own inheritance.  
Do thou redeem it." Speaking thus, he plucked  
His shoe from off his foot, and gave it him :  
A sign before the Elders in the Gate  
(For so the custom was in Israel)  
That he renounced the privilege of kin.

And Boaz said, rejoicing in his heart,  
 Before the Elders and the people all  
 Assembled in the Gate : “ Be witnesses,  
 That I have purchased all the heritage  
 Which was Naomi’s, and whate’er belonged  
 To Mahlon and to Chilion her sons,  
 And with it Mahlon’s wife, to be my wife  
 (That our dead kinsman’s name be not cut off  
 Among his brethren in the City Gate),  
 The Moabitess Ruth.”

With one accord  
 The Elders echoed, “ We are witnesses ;”  
 And added (for they loved the man and Ruth),  
 “ Jehovah make this woman in thy house  
 Like Rachel and like Leah, Jacob’s wives,  
 Twin pillars of the House of Israel !  
 And make the offspring she shall bear for thee  
 Like Pharez’ Seed, whom Tamar bare of old  
 To Judah—blessèd of the Lord our God.”

\*            \*            \*            \*

So Boaz married Ruth : and when again  
 The pale gold barley rustled in the breeze  
 She bare a son.

Straightway the women ran  
 With eager joy to bring Naomi word,  
 And cried : “ No longer art thou desolate,  
 Or like a barren stock in Israel,  
 For Ruth, who clave to thee in evil times,  
 Who has been better than seven sons to thee,  
 Hath borne a child—thy son—to give thee back  
 Thy pleasant days and cherish thee in eld.”  
 Naomi went to Ruth ; who, when she saw

Her coming, half in smiles and half in tears,  
With quivering lip, held out the sturdy boy,  
Then laid him nestling on her yearning heart.  
And she became his nurse, and all her woe  
Was like a frightful dream, when one awakes  
And sees the sunshine and the happy fields.  
Thus while Naomi nursed the child of Ruth  
He smiled away the aching from her heart,  
And all her pleasant days came back again,  
And all her comely looks, as she had looked  
Before she went to sojourn in the Land  
Of Moab ; and her latter days were Peace.





## WATER.

**T**HE patriarch bowed beside his altar fire,  
While the Creator swore  
To overwhelm with waterfloods of ire  
This world no more.

No more should infants on the cold expanse,  
Wave-cradled, tempest-driven,  
Appeal supine with marble countenance  
Upturned to Heaven.

At eventide our Sun of Glory shed  
His radiance on the flood,  
Thenceforth an arch of promise overhead  
Leads up to God !

And water the destroyer learns to save,  
The spoiler to increase,  
Instead of death is life : for angry rave  
Of breakers—peace !

Bright drops poured duly with the Mystic Word  
Upon a baby brow,  
A dew of benison from Christ the Lord,  
“ Doth save us now.”

And evermore across the water's face  
Returns that Gentle Dove,  
Who brings the threefold olive branch of grace,  
Faith, Hope, and Love.



## THE HOLY CHILDHOOD.

**H**E grew in silent beauty on the hills of Galilee,  
Like the star when daylight fadeth, like the  
moon-path on the sea,  
Like the treasure of the wild red rose,  
maturing hour by hour,  
That rounds a perfect circle and perfumes its native  
bower.

But once the breath of heaven blew the sheltering screen  
aside,  
And showed what vermeil promise that enfolded blossom  
\ dyed ;  
But once our nursing Lily let a sunbeam interpose  
For faithful spirits to adore her half-developed Rose.

But once : and then we see Him, for a little moment's  
space,  
The Son, the Everlasting in His Father's holy place ;  
We hear the Word Incarnate speak : His voice's gentle  
tone  
Falls soft as wintry snow-flakes on the slopes of Lebanon.

Conversing with the Rabbins grave who sit beneath the  
dome,  
Grace from His Lips distilleth, as the honey from the  
comb ;  
His Voice a childish treble ; yet the ruby cannot reach  
The depths of Godlike wisdom that are glowing in His  
Speech.

They wondered : but their hearts were blind. Would  
God that they had known  
In Him Messias, Juda's God, come down to save His  
own,  
To do His Father's business, psalm and prophet to fulfil,  
And subdue with David's sceptre all creation to His Will.

We know Thee, know Thee who Thou art, our Saviour  
King, and God ;  
With tears we kneel to kiss each spot Thine infant foot-  
steps trod ;  
O, by that home at Nazareth, and Mary Undeiled,  
Teach our proud hearts Humility—speak to us, Holy  
Child.







## THE CHORAL FUNERAL.

### PART I.—THE HOUSE.

**T**OLL! In a thousand hearts the bell's vibration,  
The muffled moaning of that iron tongue,  
Awakes-an answering thrill of lamentation  
Far as its voice is flung!

Toll! All the hamlet mourns : yet the departed  
Could boast no storied name, no high degree ;  
A youth of lowly birth, but gentle-hearted—  
A village teacher he.

An honest, happy boy he grew before us ;  
When work was done, alert at comrades' call  
With hearty mirth to swell the tuneful chorus,  
Or urge the bounding ball.

But when the bell, whose melancholy voicing  
Invites the mourners to his funeral bier,  
Proclaimed some sacred Feast of high rejoicing  
To Christ's own children dear ;

To him a warm and filial heart was granted,  
To heed our Mother's oft-neglected calls,  
And bow the knee where prayer and praise are chanted,  
Within the Chancel walls.

How often will arise a tearful yearning,  
Evoked by hymns he sang with us of yore,  
The while we keep each Feast and Fast returning ;  
But he returns no more !

And yet our truer spirit is confessing,  
That were affection's voice endued with power  
To call our dead from yonder home of blessing,  
We would not for an hour

Renew, by importuning supplication,  
"The thousand natural ills" of vanished years,  
Or mar the resting soul's emancipation  
From travail and from tears.

PART II.—THE CHURCH.

Toll ! Lift the white-cross bier with tender caution ;  
Toll ! Bear him gently from his father's door ;  
Toll ! Let the strain, "Brief life is here our portion,"  
Float sweetly on before.

He comes ! No more, O bell, of tolling sadness ;  
Ring out, ring out a welcome from afar,  
For mothers greet their hero sons with gladness,  
Though wounded in the war.

Stricken to death ! His wounds, ah ! who can number ?  
Hark ! " My Redeemer liveth " ; at His Word  
These sealèd eyelids shall shake off their slumber,  
And gaze upon the Lord !

Home, home at last ! No pagan pomp of mourning  
Is here to scorn the faith our hearts believe,  
But Christmas wreaths, and hopeful texts adorning  
The Church this New Year's Eve.

Peace, all is peace ; the chant serenely flowing,  
" The Prince of Peace " emblazoned on the wall,  
The flowers on the coffin, and the glowing  
Utterance of Blessèd Paul !

And now in turn we sing before the Altar,  
Where first he knelt to eat the Living Bread,  
" Dixi custodiam," but our voices falter  
Above the quiet dead :

Thinking how one, who oft in Christian union  
Ate and drank with us in the year gone by,  
Had craved at midnight hour his Last Communion,  
Then laid him down to die.

PART III.—THE GRAVE.

For the last time beneath the sacred portal,  
Along the churchyard path the mourners wound,  
To sow in hope another seed immortal  
In Jesus' garden-ground.

And still we hear the bold refrain repeated,  
 "What aileth thee, that thou hast fled, O Sea?  
 Wherefore, O Jordan, have thy waves retreated,  
 And left the passage free?"

"The Lord is here! His Presence ne'er forsaketh  
 The pilgrim host of happy Israel,  
 Before His Face the desert flint outbreaketh  
 Into a springing well."

Silent at length the ancient Hebrew Pæan;  
 Around the grave on either side we stand;  
 Above, the slowly darkening empyrean,  
 Beneath, the snow-clad land.

But as the sun's bright chariot hastes to leave us,  
 Narrowing its course across the face of day,  
 Yet nature only bids him thus bereave us,  
 To illumine the Far-away;

And wake beneath his equatorial splendour  
 A fairer landscape with a brighter glow,  
 And nourish blossoms odorous and tender,  
 That fear no frost and snow;

And evening fades to morning! So the setting  
 Of earthly suns amid this wintry strife  
 For Christian souls is evermore begetting  
 Clear morns of endless life.

Our night is falling; but a cloudless morrow  
 In Paradise is orient for him,  
 Around whose rest in no ungrateful sorrow  
 We chant the "Evening Hymn."

Some ministering angel bade him bring it,  
The offering of his dying lips to God ;  
And therefore to the self-same tune we sing it  
Above the upturned sod.

At peace with Thee, at peace with all, we leave him ;  
Secure "beneath the shadow of Thy wings,"  
Now and at that great Judgment Day receive him,  
Lord Jesu, King of Kings !

R. I. P.



T. D.



## CONSOLATION.

*A BALLAD.*

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### THE STEWARD'S TALE.

**A** ROSE has climbed the southern wall  
And blushing seeks regard to win,  
Why doth the Lady at the Hall  
Refuse to let its fragrance in?  
The shadows sweep across the hill,  
The waters in the valley play,  
Why is the manor-house as still  
As death itself to-day?

And all within is wrapt in gloom,  
The servants move with shrouded brows  
And voices husht in darkened room,  
As if a corpse were in the house.  
Why doth the Lady kneel apart  
Before an open book to-day,  
And press it to her lips and heart,  
And fast, and weep, and pray?

<sup>r</sup> A sequel to "Home Sickness," p. 41.

You wonder. Yes, the rose is fine ;  
 But one grew here more fair and tall ;  
 The sun upon the hill doth shine,  
 But he was sunshine in the Hall.  
 One voice hath faltered parting word  
 Will utter greeting word no more,  
 One welcome footfall ne'er be heard  
 Beside his mother's door.

This was the day ! Ten years ago  
 That bloody victory was won  
 On Alma's height. God willed it so,  
 My Lady lost her only son.  
 And ever as the months roll round  
 She keeps this sad September-day  
 For him who lies in alien ground,  
 Unheeded, far away.

That book she gave with trembling hand  
 When last she kist him at the door,  
 They sent it home from Russian land,  
 And she will keep it evermore.  
 A ghastly crimson stain beneath  
 Those well-worn covers scarcely hide,  
 He blest it with his parting breath,  
 And claspt it when he died.

Ah, 'twas a vision one might see  
 Upon a restless fever-bed,  
 My Lady in her agony  
 When first she knew her son was dead.

She listened for the postman's horn,  
She met the tidings at the door,  
And fainting fell—O woeful morn !  
Upon the marble floor.

Then while we bathed her forehead pale,  
And knew that she was free from pain,  
We almost dreaded to prevail  
And win her back to thought again.  
Too soon, too soon she raised her head,  
And uttered but one bitter cry—  
No more—yet we who heard it said  
'Twere better far to die.

Thro' many a weary, weary night  
With unclosed eyes she watched for day,  
But when she saw the dawning light,  
Loathing she turned her face away.  
At morn, at noon, at eventide,  
" Ah, me," she said, " he cannot come.  
Would God," she said, " that I had died  
For thee, my son ;" as David cried  
For fallen Absalom.

So when her mourning found no end,  
And time no solace seemed to give ;  
We prayed kind Heaven some help to send,  
Or that my Lady might not live.  
How wonderful are all His ways !  
How graciously He works His will !  
In darkest gloom of evil days  
He thinks of mercy still.



It happened thus : a youthful wife  
Dwelt in a cot a mile away,  
Her husband gone to join the strife  
When the fierce Cossack stood at bay.  
Dread tidings came. He too was gone.  
Her bridal flowers were scarcely dead !  
And now she sat and wept alone  
Beside her widowed bed.

My Lady comes of haughty line ;  
She was right generous with her gold,  
But seldom would her heart incline  
To list the story Misery told.  
She was not loved : where'er she went  
The peasants bowed and stood aloof,  
Rarely, if ever, she unbent  
Beneath a poor man's roof.

But when she heard of Elsie's woe,  
She cast her plaid about her straight,  
And sought that night the glen below  
With earnest look and hurrying gait.  
I followed her ; for hill and dale  
Lay buried deep in drifted snow,  
'Twere all unfit for one so frail  
Through such a night to go.

She glided on with motion swift,  
A shadow o'er the pathless white,  
And little recked the dangerous drift  
Or biting keenness of the night.

Across the wild and wintry land  
    (So silently she knew it not)  
I followed ; and I saw her stand  
    Before poor Elsie's cot.

The mourner rose in wild surprise,  
    And reverence made with bended knee,  
Then strove to dry her streaming eyes  
    And check the sob of misery.  
" Poor child, would God that I could cure  
    Thy aching wound," the Lady said ;  
" Full well I know 'tis hard to endure  
    This yearning for the dead !

" I've been to blame ! My heart was cold ;  
    Within my soul compassion slept ;  
I thought to solace grief with gold,  
    I never wept with those who wept.  
And then the Master sent me woe ;  
    But, child, I dare not now repine,  
If thus He taught these tears to flow  
    In sympathy with thine.

" My boy, my boy ! the punishment  
    Was greater than my soul could bear,  
Till He in sweet compassion sent  
    A voice to rouse me from despair.  
' Go, wipe the tear from sorrow's cheek,  
    Go, hush the wounded spirit's moan ;  
Each burden lifted from the weak,  
    Shall surely ease thine own.'

“ And so, remembering that dread hour  
 Which blasted with its bitter breath  
 My only one, my darling flower,  
 And left me but a living death,  
 I come, poor Elsie, widowed bride,  
 Intreating thee to let me stay  
 A fellow-mourner by thy side,  
 To pity and to pray.”

And then she spake of that fair home,  
 Jerusalem, the city blest,  
 Where brave and noble spirits come  
 And enter into perfect rest.

“ They have no sorrow there,” she said ;  
 “ Would God we two were with them now ; ”  
 And as she spake, her hand she laid  
 On Elsie’s burning brow.

And patient in her blessèd toil,  
 My Lady lowly vigil kept,  
 Pouring with gentle hand the oil  
 Of comfort, till the mourner slept.  
 To see her condescending thus,  
 A shepherdess to this poor lamb,  
 It made me think of Lazarus  
 Consoled by Abraham ;

And how, when this world is no more,  
 The rich in faith and poor in pride  
 Shall all join hands on yonder shore,  
 And be together glorified.  
 A sudden blaze leaps up, and flings  
 A halo from the hearth around,  
 ’Tis like a gleam of angel wings  
 O’ershadowing holy ground.



“SEE, HERE IS WATER.”

*Thoughts arising from a comparison of the two Evening  
Lessons for January 14th in the New Calendar.*

**J**ERUSALEM to Gaza ; that is it  
Which compasseth Beersheba, desert land  
Unmarked by time, save where the Spirit writ  
Two fadeless histories in the shifting sand.

And Mother Church, sagacious to divide  
The Word of God, on that untrodden scene  
Displayeth these life-dramas, side by side,  
Albeit two thousand summers intervene.

I see a Syrian mother leave her child  
Beneath a stunted shrub, and wait alone  
A bowshot off ; her eyes with anguish wild  
Pleading in concert with her darling's moan.

I see a chariot passing by that way,  
And one who reads a volume in his hand  
With look perplexed and sad, as who should say,  
“ I read, my God, but cannot understand.”

First that, then this ! how diverse to the sight !  
Yet, like twin sun-prints in the stereoscope,  
The incongruous lines harmoniously unite,  
And form one perfect picture, bright with hope :

One picture of a thirsting heart that pleads,  
Lost in a wildering desert, for relief,  
The same, within whatever breast it bleeds,  
Of swarthy slave-girl or of car-borne chief.

And of One High Impartial Comforter,  
Alike for mean or noble, bond or free,  
To open healing fountains, and confer  
Enduring treasures and the heavenly key.<sup>1</sup>

“ See, here is water ! ”—water sent to save  
The drooping life of Hagar’s outcast child :  
“ See, here is water ! ”—a baptismal wave  
To wash the Ethiop white and undefiled.

Flow on, swift runlet, to the western main !  
Thy storied waters teach me while they roll  
That mourners’ cry ascendeth not in vain  
For suffering body or for thirsting soul.

God hears and answers all : like golden chains  
That bind His Heart to earth, nor space can sever,  
Nor centuries corrode, His love remains  
Unchanging yesterday, to-day, for ever.

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii. 27.



“OUT OF EGYPT HAVE I CALLED MY SON.”

**C**ALLED out by Voice of thunder,  
Through tears, and blood, and flame,  
Through billows rent asunder,  
Thy son from Egypt came—  
Thy Israel, Thy “first-born,”  
When visited by Thee,  
A ransomed band  
Marched from the land  
Of bondage and were free.

A gentler warning given  
From Egypt called Thy Son,  
The Incarnate King of Heaven,  
The Sole-Begotten One ;  
When angel-guards encircled  
The Lily of the Vale,  
To shield from foes  
Our Sharon’s Rose,  
And cool the desert gale.

And now through mystic waters,  
To seek a Father's home,  
Thy Gentile sons and daughters  
Thou callest, and we come !  
O feed us, else we perish,  
With Manna as we go ;  
And from the Side  
Of Him who Died,  
Bid streams of mercy flow.

And lest the foe enthrall us  
Again on Egypt's shore,  
O Love Paternal, call us,  
And call us evermore :  
Add fervour to the spirit,  
And courage to the heart ;  
We too are sons,  
Thy chosen ones,  
And Thou our Father art.

How long, like faithful Moses,  
Must we, regarding not  
Egyptia's dainty roses,  
Endure the pilgrim's lot ?  
Call us once more, O Father,  
And bid Thy wanderers see  
The joyful rest,  
The City Blest,  
Jerusalem and Thee.



## GILGAL.

### *AN ALLEGORY.*

“ They took twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.”

**M**ETHOUGHT I stood within the camping-ground  
Where Israel's myriad warriors slept that night

They crossed the Jordan, ere their eager sight  
Had searched the fruitful valleys spreading round.

With helm unclasped they lay, and loosened mail,  
Each in his rank : and, seeing not their breath,  
A shudder chilled my heart ; so like to death  
Those forms recumbent and those faces pale.

I saw twelve mighty boulders ; side by side  
Their ghastly whiteness glimmered in the dark ;  
Each on its rounded surface showed the mark  
Of that fierce river's ever-fretting tide.



They stood memorials of the might of God,  
Which, when high Jordan flooded all the lands  
At harvest-tide, brought Israel's tired bands  
Across the rocky river-bed dry shod.

For when the ripples, lapping at the brim,  
Bedewed with spray the High Priest's naked feet,  
The shrinking river fled its ancient seat,  
The baffled billows bowed the knee to him.

Mid channel stayed the Ark while all passed o'er ;  
And Jordan's watery wall at Zaretan  
Stood firm ; till Judah first and rearward Dan  
Had furled their darkling banners on the shore.

Methought I saw the weary pilgrims rest  
Upon "the lap of earth : " ere long the day  
With trumpet-call would rouse them, and display  
The goodly land "with milk and honey blest."





## EPIPHANY.

**T**HE sun, long since uprisen, waits o'erhead  
In seas of living lustre islanded :  
In vain ! for earth enfolds herself in grey,  
Cold mist, impervious to the cheering ray :  
The noon-tide hour is past ! Ah, will there be  
From dawn to sunset no Epiphany ?

The gloom is not unbroken ; here and there  
Through azure rift the sun's pale golden hair,  
At first in eastern clime, then farther west,  
Is trailed aslant on tree and mountain crest  
That glows cross-crowned, a distant Calvary,  
Enaureoled in brief Epiphany.

But envious fogs, exhaled from dank lagoon,  
Enshroud with dusk-expanding wings too soon  
The pure light struggling through each gilded spot ;  
'Tis lost, and darkness comprehends it not !  
Till waiting eyes wax weary, strained to see  
The glorious Sun, and His Epiphany.

For like the tongue of flame that shouteth war  
From cliff to headland furiously and far;  
As lightning leapeth from the eastern haze  
And scares the west with one continuous blaze;  
So, Light of Light, shall Thy appearing be,  
The sevenfold sun of Thine Epiphany !

But not till earth's dark cloudy day is o'er,  
Till wanes this sun, and time shall be no more,  
Till spirits of the air and shapes of night  
Fly shrieking from the Presence of that Light  
Which maketh all things new, may watchers see  
The outburst of that grand Epiphany.

Not of the things-that-be did seers behold  
Foreshadowed gleams of beauty manifold;  
This busy earth, like one vast funeral pyre,  
Waits but the breath of God to melt in fire !  
Then out of Chaos Life, the world-to-be,  
The golden City, the Epiphany.





## MATER DOLOROSA.

*A BALLAD.*

**T**IS sad to see the yellow leaf when winter days  
are near,  
And sadder when the hoar frost nips the  
promise of the year ;  
But when untimely blasts uproot, or cankering mildews  
blight  
The vine in her summer fruitfulness—that is the saddest  
sight.

She is almost gone : five years a wife ; four years of  
wedded bliss,  
And then one year of calm decay ; and now it is come  
to this.

I've knelt by many a dying bed of happiness or woe,  
But death has seldom had the power to move my spirit so.

For I am old, and she is young, and I knew her long  
before,  
When she sat a child in the warm twilight and sang at her  
father's door ;

And I gave her hand to the hand she loved ; but that has  
past away :

It seems so strange that I should live to see her burial day.

Through all last year un murmuring she bent beneath the  
rod,

And gathered, as her strength declined, increasing faith  
in God ;

Till all her will was blent with His : and now the hour is  
nigh,

She looks to Jesus' Cross alone to teach her how to die.

He breathes a peace the world knows not, as Holy Scrip-  
ture saith,

He tempers for his dying lamb the chilly airs of death.

“ O sir,” she said, “ did I not know my Lord's dear love  
for me,

What other comfort could I find in this extremity ?”

Another sleepless night is past, another sun is risen,

Her gentle spirit lingers yet within its shrunken prison,

But lo ! her cheek is wet with tears, her bosom heaves  
with woe,

And strengthened by some mortal grief she tosseth to  
and fro.

“ Dear daughter, hath some early sin forgotten, unconfest,  
Disturbed the Dove of holy peace which made thy  
labour rest ?

Take heart again ; look up ; believe that thou wilt  
enter in ;

The Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord hath cleansèd *all*  
thy sin.

“But yesterday, upborne by hope which death could not  
affright,  
Thou didst but wait till He should come, and faith be lost  
in sight ;  
And now—Good Jesus, suffer not this soul to fall away  
From Thee through any pains of death”—thus did the  
old man pray.

It is not *that*: the upward sign, the look of trusting love,  
Are tokens of an anchored hope which Satan cannot  
move ;  
It is not *that*, but a faintest sound of voices far away  
(Ah, how it vibrates in her heart) of her little ones at  
play.

O mother's heart, O mother's love, so tender and so sure !  
All other earthly loves may fail, but a mother's will en-  
dure ;  
How often when the prodigal with selfish, sinful will  
Has tried it to the uttermost, that love remaineth still !

And when his sin has found him out, and he, as good as  
dead,  
Can find no shelter where to hide his poor, degraded  
head,  
Can gain no word of pity, but only scorn and blame,  
A mother is a mother still in spite of sin and shame.

O mother's love, dear mother's love, how strong to soothe  
and bless !  
She only sees her own dear boy and all his wretchedness,  
She only thinks of holy paths his infant feet once trod,  
And trusts that she will win him back to virtue and to  
God.

Dear mother's love, so oft deceived, yet full of trust again,  
 Least worthless type our world can show of Jesus' Love  
     for men ;  
 'Tis wringing now her failing heart ; it chokes her parting  
     breath,  
 The mother's yearning for her own is mightiest in death.

“ Their voices ! hush, their voices, sir ! I know the pro-  
     mise true,  
 But, O my pretty little ones, how can I part from you ? ”  
 I wept with her, but what avails to stay the mother's moan,  
 No human tears, no human words, save Jesus' words  
     alone.

I pointed to the Saviour's Cross, His Cross of utter woe,  
 And bade her mark the drooping form that waited there  
     below,  
 And see how *they* were parted—That Mother and That  
     Son ;  
 That so her soul might gather strength to say, “ Thy Will  
     be done.”

“ Mid scorners and blasphemers His dear Brow she could  
     not kiss,  
 She could not hold His nailèd hand—was ever death like  
     His ?  
 For thee and thine He suffered all : and now He bids  
     thee sip  
 The chalice of this bitter grief with uncomplaining lip.”

His “ Son, behold thy mother,” she remembered that  
     dear word,  
 And pleaded in her agony, “ Behold, Thy children, Lord,

The children Thou hast given me : they bear Thy Holy  
Sign,  
And now I bring them back to Thee to be for ever Thine.

“ I die content ; for Thou wilt love them better far, and  
keep  
My lambs with more than mother’s care, when I am laid  
asleep ;  
By Mary’s woe beneath the Cross, protect the babes I  
leave ;  
By that Farewell on Calvary, my dying charge receive.

“ And when Thy jewels are made up from among the sons  
of men,  
I shall look for all my pretty ones to see their faces then ;  
They may be little children still, or men and women grown,  
But my heart will point them out to me, and I shall know  
my own.”

She slept and never woke again, a token of the rest  
That soothes her tender spirit in the regions of the Blest,  
Where the Good Shepherd feeds His flock, and leads to  
fairer bowers,  
And cooler streams, and sunnier fields, and sweeter  
homes than ours.

You would hardly deem her a mother, if you never before  
had known  
That form so wasted and faded which Death has made  
his own,  
For the young look has come back again, the same sweet  
look she wore  
When she used to sit in the warm twilight and sing at her  
father’s door.





### THE SNOWDROP.

**H**ERE is a snowy blossom  
That opens in the spring,  
Whose transient beauty withers  
Before the linnets sing.  
Such was her soul's expansion,  
Such was her early fall ;  
The Favourite of the village,  
The Darling of the hall.

A fierce unsparing tempest  
Came sweeping o'er her bower,  
And smote our tender Snowdrop  
For many a weary hour ;  
And trampled out her sweetness  
With unrelenting foot,  
And scattering all her leaflets,  
Left but a faded root.

We planted it with weeping,  
But hope illumed our tears,  
Forecasting all the glory  
Of the consummated years.

We knew she was but sleeping  
The slumber of the Blest,  
Whereby He sweetly giveth  
His own belovèd rest.

So sleepeth now our Snowdrop  
Within her guarded bed ;  
She doeth well that sleepeth,  
We will not call her dead.  
Dead things are dead for ever,  
Dead things can never rise ;  
But our dear buried Snowdrop  
Will open her sweet eyes.

When the weary winter passes,  
And the singing birds rejoice ;  
When within the leafy covert  
Is heard the turtle's voice ;  
When the renovating zephyr  
Dissolves the chilly snow ;  
When the world puts on her raiment,  
Such as faded long ago ;

When the Lord of Flowers cometh  
To breathe upon the earth,  
And all our sleeping blossoms  
Are springing into birth ;  
When the thorn and brier perish,  
And the rose and myrtle rise ;  
Our little buried Snowdrop  
Will open her sweet eyes !

But now, when lamps are lighted  
To chase the winter gloom,  
And her dear ones all are gathered  
Within the curtained room ;  
When the cares of day are over,  
The anxious heart at ease,  
And the fair-haired children clamber  
About their parents' knees :

They miss the loving-kindness  
Of touch and look and tone,  
Breathings of home-affection,  
Which won her all their own ;  
And they miss the rippling music  
Of her master-melodies,  
And the flashing of her fingers  
Across the sounding keys.

The soul's unsated yearning  
For loved ones gone before  
Is like an angel leading  
Toward the Better Shore.  
I see His track of glory  
Across Death's misty sea ;  
He draws aside the curtain  
Which hid the Blest from me !

Lo ! in the midst a maiden,  
With tresses golden bright,  
A jewelled crown, a palm-branch,  
And robes of lustrous white,

*SACRED POEMS.*

And a dear hand beckoning ever,  
And a pleading look of love,  
And a gentle voice, "Oh, hasten  
To this happier home above."

God help us ! We will hasten,  
We cannot say thee nay ;  
O pray for us, sweet spirit,  
And speed us on our way ;  
Till, sin and sorrow over,  
We wander at thy side,  
Where the Tree of Life is growing,  
Where the Living Waters glide ;

Till we hear the rippling music  
We remember float along,  
Attuned to golden harping,  
Attuned to silvery song ;  
Till we see thee meekly leaning  
On the Tender Shepherd's breast,  
And behold thy word's full meaning,  
"Yes, in heaven there is rest."

R. I. P.



J. F.



## MORS VICTA.

“We sorrow not as others which have no hope.”

**N**EEDS must we mourn our loved ones past  
away ;—  
Bid not our tears to cease, though well we  
know

Their home is now in realms of nightless day,  
Far, far from earth's unceasing round of woe.

We may not yet a strain of triumph sing,  
While in our hearts the grave's dull echo lingers ;  
And, wet with falling tears, each tuneful string  
Would thrill discordant 'neath our trembling fingers.

'Tis on the rain-cloud's curtain dark and dreary,  
Not on bright skies, the Bow of Hope is born ;  
And we must chant our Lenten “*miserere*”  
Before we hail the joyous Easter morn.

The skies, when sinks their Sun in darksome night,  
On earth's cold breast weep tears of orphaned sorrow,  
Though he on other lands is beaming bright,  
And soon will rise to bring the gladsome morrow.

So will we weep : and as the freshened earth  
Puts forth new flowers beneath the night-fall'n dew,  
In our parched hearts some plant of heavenly birth,  
That long hath drooped, may bud and bloom anew.

Fond mortals, hoping, doubting sons of clay,  
We shrink and shudder at the lifted dart ;  
When Faith's strong hand might pluck thy mask away,  
Grim Death, and show thee, as indeed thou art,

No conqueror proud—a weak and trembling slave,  
Who marks with fainting heart and anxious eye  
Each grain of dust that through the narrow grave  
Drops down from Time into Eternity.

These are the sands that measure in God's glass  
Thy term of triumph : but a few grains more  
Of that swift ever-running stream must pass,  
And thy brief hour of tyranny is o'er.





## HYMNS AND PSALMS.



TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN.

“TE LUCIS ANTE TERMINUM.”

**B**EFORE the daylight fades away,  
Creator of the world, we pray,  
O let Thy wonted Mercy stand  
Our wakeful guardian nigh at hand.

Let no defiling dream molest,  
No darkling sprite approach, our rest ;  
Confound our deadly foe's design  
To stain these bodies that are Thine.

Father Omnipotent, afford  
This help through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
Who with the Holy Ghost and Thee  
Doth live and reign eternally.

AMEN.



TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

“TE LUCIS ANTE TERMINUM.”

(A Second Version.)

**W**E whom Thou hast made,  
Ere the light be ended,  
With Thy wonted aid  
Pray to be defended.

Let no darkling sprite,  
No foul dreams, beguile us ;  
Check our foe to-night,  
Lest his arts defile us.

Grant all this, we pray,  
Through Christ Jesu's merit,  
Who with Thee for aye  
Reigns, and with the Spirit.

AMEN.





TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN.

“ JAM LUCIS ORTO, SIDERE.”

**N**OW that the risen sun we see,  
Beseech we God, on bended knee,  
In every action of the day  
To keep us from each hurtful way.

To place a bridle on the tongue,  
Lest the alarm of strife be rung ;  
To vail the eyes that vainly rove  
With holy influence from above.

To keep our spirits pure within  
From thoughts of passion and of sin,  
While we by spare and simple food  
Subdue the pride of flesh and blood.

So when, the day forsakes our sight,  
And changeful nature brings us night,  
No discords of the world shall dim  
The “ gloria ” of our vesper hymn.

Thee, Jesu Virgin-born, we praise,  
Father, to Thee our song we raise,  
Thee, Holy Spirit, we adore  
For ever and for evermore. AMEN.



FOR 'THE OLD PEOPLE'S FESTIVAL,  
HELD IN THE AUTHOR'S PARISH  
ON SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST'S DAY.

" Forsake me not in my old age."

**W**ORD, in these sacred courts a band  
Of pilgrims full of years we stand :  
To glorify the New-born Son,  
And keep the Feast of good Saint John.

Accept the tribute of our praise  
For goodness that has crowned our days ;  
From infant years to life's last end  
Thou art our Father and our Friend.

Whene'er we strayed with sinful will,  
Thy loving-kindness sought us still ;  
And when we bent the suppliant knee,  
We gained a pardoning smile from Thee.

We could not see from day to day,  
But Thou hast brought us on our way,  
And, rough or smooth, Thy way is best,  
It leads through hope to perfect rest.

The hoary brow, the failing strength,  
Remind us of our journey's length ;  
We hear the River's solemn flow  
Louder and louder as we go.

Like John the agèd may we be ;  
Our hearts so full of love for Thee,  
That we, like him, may cry, "O come,  
Come quickly, Jesu : take us home."

We tarry but for Thee to guide  
Our trembling feet o'er Jordan's tide,  
And to our fond embrace restore  
Belovèd friends who passed before.





TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN.

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FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

“SALVETE FLORES MARTYRUM.”

**H**AIL, garland of martyrs,  
Whom Christ's persecutor  
On Light's very threshold  
Swept off, as a whirlwind  
Might ravish the rose-buds.

First victims for Jesus !  
Like lambkins meal-sprinkled,  
In front of the altar  
Ye guilelessly sported  
With palm and with chaplet !

From crime so accursèd  
What profit to Herod ?  
Lo ! One among many,  
Our Jesus, uninjured  
Is rescued from slaughter.

Unhurt amid torrents  
Of infantine bloodshed,  
The Child of the Virgin  
Evaded the sword which  
Made young mothers childless.

Thus Moses in old time,  
Who rescued His people,  
Prefiguring Jesus,  
Had baffled the bootless  
Commandment of Pharaoh.

Sing praise to your Captain  
In joy and destruction,  
In health and in sickness—  
In death, for from henceforth  
Man dieth no longer ! AMEN.





## PSALM I.

*FIRST PART.—VERSES 1 AND 2.*

FOR LENT AND PASSION-TIDE.

**B**LESSED Thou wert before  
Creation's work began,  
And Blessèd evermore  
We hail Thee, Son of man.

Our Second Adam, Thou  
Didst conquer in the wild ;  
No cruel scorn could bow  
Thy Manhood undefiled.

For in temptation's day,  
And death's long torturing night,  
God's <sup>1</sup> Word was still Thy stay,  
Thy study, Thy delight.

All glory, Lord, to Thee  
Most tempted, tortured most ;  
With God the Father be,  
And God the Holy Ghost.

<sup>1</sup> See Deut. viii. 3 ; vi. 16 ; x. 20 ; and Ps. xxii., which our Lord, it is thought, recited while on the Cross.



PSALM I.

*SECOND PART.—VERSES 3 AND 4.*

FOR EASTER-TIDE.



JESU, Tree of Life  
O'ershadowing holy ground,  
Where gracious gales are rife,  
Where healing streams abound ;

Fruits, in due season ripe,  
Thy noble branches lade ;  
And, of Thy words the type,  
Green leaves that never fade.

Expand from sea to sea,  
Still prosper and increase ;  
We fly, like birds, to Thee  
For shelter, food, and peace.

All glory, Lord, to Thee  
Most Highest, lauded most,  
With God the Father be,  
And God the Holy Ghost.



WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK.

“Is it I?”



STREAMING Blood, O wounded Flesh,  
Of Jesus on the cursèd Tree !  
Can I constrain to bleed afresh  
The wounds that plead in heaven for me ?

How can I set at nought again  
The patient Lamb who meekly died ;  
Or slay once more the Victim Slain,  
And crucify the Crucified ?

Forbid it, Lord. Enough that one  
Kissed and betrayed his God and Friend ;  
I pray for grace such guilt to shun :  
O save me from the traitor's end.

Great is my sin ! “ Lord, is it I ? ”  
This burdened soul is forced to say :  
Have mercy, Jesu, and reply,  
“ Lo, I have put thy sin away.” AMEN.





FOR HOLY WEEK.

*Ἰλασθητί μοι τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν*

**A**LL my sins uprising now  
Wring my heart and brand my brow ;  
Bold, presumptuous sins of youth,  
Despite done to Grace and Truth :  
Is there Mercy left for me ?  
“ Jesus died : He died for thee ! ”

Deeds and words and fancies vain  
Darker, deadlier made the stain  
On the Record kept on high,  
On my soul condemned to die :  
Is there cleansing left for me ?  
“ Jesus bled : He bled for thee ! ”

Ah, my heart is hard within,  
Callous through repeated sin,  
When I fain would kneel and pray,  
Satan steals the power away :  
Tell, what hope remains for me ?  
“ Jesus prayed : He prayed for thee. ”

Once far back in vanished years  
I bedewed my couch with tears ;  
Now no gracious drops will flow  
From my deeper fount of woe :  
Death and judgment wait for me.  
“ Jesus wept : He wept for thee ! ”

Dare I lift my shameful face,  
I who trampled on His grace ?  
Dare I seek the Lord of Light  
Where His saints are clad in white ?  
How they all would shrink from me !  
“ Jesus stoops : He stoops to thee ! ”

“ Jesus died to make thee whole ;  
Jesus bled to wash thy soul ;  
Jesus prayed, and thou hast part ;  
Jesus wept to break thy heart ;  
Jesus stoops : poor sinner, see ;  
Rise, look up, He calleth thee ! ”





PSALM III.

*VERSES 2, 3, 4, 5, 8.*

EASTER EVE.

“ **N**O help for Him in God !”  
The ruthless mocker said ;  
But Thou, O Father, wilt lift up  
Thy Son’s Anointed Head.

His soul He now consigns  
To Thy Paternal care,  
And Thou in highest heaven hast heard  
His commendation-prayer.

So Jesus laid Him down  
To sleep in Joseph’s grave ;  
A little while, and He will rise  
A Victor strong to save.

Salvation to our God,  
No other name we know  
Who lifts in heaven a Piercèd Hand  
To bless His Church below.



PSALM II.—*VERSES* 1, 2, 6, 7, 8.

EASTER-TIDE.

**A**GAINST the Lord's Anointed,  
Against our holy King,  
The heathen and the people  
Their furious counsel bring.  
Against the Holy Jesus  
Uplift an impious hand,  
False Pilate with his soldiers,  
And Herod with his band.

But He in Sion's city  
Shall sit in royal state,  
Enthroned by God the Father,  
The Only Potentate !  
Then Herod from his palace,  
And Pilate from his hall,  
Shall bow the knee to Jesus,  
And own Him Lord of all.

To-day, through heathen kingdoms,  
The heritage He won,  
Let heralds of salvation  
With gospel-tidings run :  
While Heaven and Earth adore Him,  
From that new Tomb new-born,  
The Son of God, Begotten  
This holy Easter morn.



PSALM CXXVI.—*VERSES* 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

ASCENSION-TIDE.

“**G**REAT things for them already,”  
We hear the heathen say ;  
“Great things for us already,”  
Our lips repeat to-day :  
Great things for us and glorious  
Hath God Incarnate done ;  
And manifold the Graces  
By His Ascension won.

As rivers from high mountains  
Released from icy chain  
Roll down refreshing fountains  
Through thirsty southern plain :  
Descend, O Lord ; come quickly  
To set Thy people free,  
That all who mourn in Sion  
May share like joy with Thee.

For he who now goes weeping  
And sowing precious grain,  
May sleep before the reaping ;  
But he shall wake again,  
And doubtless come rejoicing  
With golden harvest-store,  
And pile his sheaves of glory  
On heaven's garner-floor.



## THE TRANSFIGURATION.

AUGUST SIXTH.

“ With Him in the Holy Mount.”



ONE Tabernacle, Lord, not three,  
Wherein Thou dwellest still,  
Descending out of heaven we see  
Upon Thy holy Hill ;  
Our covert from the noontide heat,  
Our refuge from the cold,  
Where brethren in the body greet  
The hero-saints of old.

What if the crowd beneath the Mount  
With hard unloving eyes  
For visionary fables count  
The Mysteries we prize ;  
What if Thy beauty, far away  
Through “ earth-born ” vapours seen,  
Be slighted as the mean array  
That marks the Nazarene ?

Help us to climb in mind and heart  
Where stood Thy favoured Three,  
For there "we know Thee who Thou art,"  
And all Thy glory see :  
By faith we see Thy Vesture bright  
With more than mortal grace,  
And all the Godhead's Living Light  
Is radiant in Thy Face.

'Tis thus our Hope that passeth hope  
Has "sure and certain" grown,  
To soar beyond Mount Tabor's slope  
Transfigured to Thy Throne ;  
Where Moses meek, Elias strong,  
With Peter, John, and James,  
Extol in spiritual song  
The Name above all names.





A LITERAL TRANSLATION FROM THE LATIN.

“VENI, CREATOR SPIRITUS.”



SPIRIT, O Creator, come,  
Visit the minds of us Thine own ;  
Fill with celestial Grace the breasts  
Thou didst Thyself create.

Thou who art called the Paraclete,  
The Gift of Deity Most High,  
The Living Fount, the Fire, the Love,  
The Unction spiritual.

Thou in Thine office sevenfold,  
The Finger Thou of God's Right Hand,  
The Father's solemn Promise Thou,  
Enriching tongues with speech.

Our senses brighten with Thy Light,  
Thy Love within our hearts outpour,  
Confirm with lasting energy  
Our bodies weaknesses.



Drive farther off the enemy,  
And give us peace henceforth for aye,  
Through Thee our Guide preventing thus  
    May we escape all harm.

Enable us through Thee to know  
The Father, and to know the Son,  
And Thee, the Spirit, to believe  
    Of Both for evermore.

Praise to the Father with the Son,  
Likewise to Holy Paraclete,  
And let the Son send unto us  
    The Holy Spirit's Boon.

AMEN.





FOR THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER  
TRINITY.

“ I will raise unto David a righteous branch.”

**J**UDA'S majestic tree  
Was crumbling down to earth,  
When David's Righteous Branch arose  
To give it second birth ;  
Joseph's increasing bough  
Was trembling to its fall,  
When David's Righteous Branch outspread  
It's tendrils o'er the wall.

A barrier built between  
Made Jew and Gentile twain,  
Till Christ, our Branch, o'ershadowing both,  
United them again.  
Now strife the Fold within  
Disturbs our holy calm,  
Dear Healing Branch, rain far and near  
Thy reconciling balm.

O wonder-working Branch,  
In whom all virtues meet,  
Float crosswise over Mara's wave  
Till bitter turn to sweet :  
Be Thou our sheltering Branch  
When evil tempests lower,  
And keep our undefended heads  
In Persecution's hour.

The noon-tide sun is fierce,  
We faint amid the waste ;  
Vine-branch of Eshcol, yield Thy Fruit  
Refreshing to our taste :  
And bid our gladdened hearts  
Anticipate that shore,  
Where we shall sit with great delight  
And leave Thy shade no more.





## THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

“Ye do shew the Lord’s death.”

**W**HAT offering dare we sinners lay  
Before Thee, Holy God,  
Who knowest every wicked way  
Our erring feet have trod?

A New and Living Sacrifice  
Which Thou wilt not disown,  
A Victim of uncounted price,  
We show before Thy Throne.

And for the sake of His pure Flesh,  
Of His dear Blood, we pray;  
Receive and comfort us afresh,  
Take all our sins away.

Beside Thy Son’s Great Sacrifice  
We place our worthless part,  
Thus hoping Thou wilt not despise  
A broken, contrite heart.



## THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

“ Comfortable Words.”

**S**INNERS escaping the shadow of death,  
Listen to Jesus, what sweet words He saith :  
“ Come, ye disconsolate, lean on My Breast,  
Weary one, laden one, I am thy Rest.

“ Know that the Sovereign Creator of all,  
Pitying His creatures condemned by the Fall,  
Gave His Son Only-Begotten to die.  
Sinner, believest thou? Lo, it is I !”

Sinners escaping the shadow of death,  
Listen to holy Paul, hear what he saith :  
“ Faithful the saying is, faithful and true,  
Jesus Christ Crucified died to save you.”

Sinners escaping the shadow of death,  
Hear the beloved John, hear what he saith :  
“ Jesus our Advocate, next to the Throne,  
Ransoming souls from death, offers His own.”

Threefold the witness, the comfort is one :  
Here He bestows what His Suffering won ;  
He is the Victim, and He is the Priest,  
His the Voice bidding you, Come to the Feast.



PSALM IV.

*VERSES 6, 7, 8, 9.*

THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

**W**HILE this world vainly asks for good,  
Give us, O Lord, Thy Flesh, Thy Blood,  
'Tis "good for us to" rest awhile  
Beneath the comfort of Thy smile.

Send down The Spirit, Oil Divine,  
To sanctify this Bread and Wine,  
While duly we, with gladdened eyes,  
Present our frequent Sacrifice.

And when all earthly good is past,  
When we have eat and drunk our last,  
Do Thou these souls and bodies keep  
In peace and safety while we sleep.



## THE CONSECRATION OF THE HOLY EUCCHARIST.

“ Eye hath not seen nor ear heard.”

**L**IKE the sunbeams glowing  
Silently around,  
Is Thy Coming, Jesu ;  
For we hear no sound :  
Light of Light, drive far away  
Darkness from our souls to-day.

Like the rose's perfume  
In some woodland grot,  
Thou art Present, Jesu,  
Though we see Thee not :  
Rose of Sharon, Heart of Love,  
Let us all Thy Sweetness prove.

Whom the ear perceives not,  
Eye can never trace,  
Sinful men repenting  
Tremblingly embrace :  
Humble faith and holy fear  
Hear Thee, see Thee, feel Thee near.

*SACRED POEMS.*

Dearest Lord, Who bought us,  
Hearts within us burn  
When, as Thou hast taught us,  
We Thyself discern :  
Yet we seek one higher grace,  
To behold Thee face to face.







TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN, WITH A  
EUCCHARISTIC INTENTION.

“JESU DULCIS MEMORIA.”

**J**ESUS in thought alone to greet,  
Attunes the heart to joyful song,  
But pleasures more than honey sweet,  
Around a Present Saviour throng.

How softly flows the sacred strain,  
What soothing accents charm the ear,  
How dear the thoughts we entertain,  
When Jesus, God's own Son, is near !

O Jesu, hope of mourners meek ;  
To prayer of penitents how kind !  
How good Thou art to all who seek !  
But what art Thou to those who find ?

No tongue is able to declare,  
No ready-writer's pen can show,  
But faithful souls who taste Him there  
Alone the love of Jesus know.

O Jesu, wonder-working King,  
O Victor noble in Thy might,  
O Sweetness past all uttering,  
O perfect Fountain of Delight !

Abide with us, Good Lord, we pray,  
In fulness of Thy grace divine,  
And when dark night is chased by day,  
Bring forth Thy sweetest Bread and Wine.

In Thee, O Lord, we make our boast,  
The Virgin-Mother's Virgin Son,  
With Father and with Holy Ghost,  
While never-ending ages run.

AMEN.





PSALM XXIII.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

**D**ESU, Good Shepherd, Thou art all  
Thy faithful people need,  
To raise us kindly when we fall,  
To comfort and to feed.

In life Thou art a present aid ;  
In death so vast Thy grace ;  
Thy Chastisement our peace is made ;  
Thy Cross our resting-place.

This Table Thy dear Hand has spread,  
Our safeguard from the foe ;  
Here the anointing grace is shed,  
Here blessings overflow ;

Here daily is our strength renewed,  
And all our sins forgiven,  
Until we feast on angels' food,  
And drink the cup of heaven.



## THE HOLY EUCHARIST AT PASSION-TIDE.

“ On either side of the river was there the tree of life.”

**H**AIL ! Tree of Life, in beauty bending,  
Fair Queen of Eden's wood,  
To our first father's hand extending  
Thy sweet mysterious food :  
Too soon the guilt of his transgression  
Unsheathed a vengeful brand,  
To whirl around Life's lost possession  
And flame on every hand.

Hail ! Tree of Death, on Calvary planted,  
Accursèd, blessèd Tree ;  
To thy twin arms and stem 'twas granted  
New Tree of Life to be !  
Such Red Fruit hangeth on thy branches,  
All bruised by nail and thorn,  
That three long hours the sunlight blanches  
Earth's pitying heart is torn.

The Cherub sword, no longer glowing,  
Was quenched in that full Tide  
Of mingled Blood and Water flowing  
From Jesus' gracious Side.

So " guilty souls by thousands stealing "  
    Around thy sacred stem,  
Pluck off the Fruit and Leaves of healing  
    Their Lord redeemed for them.

Hail ! Sacrament of grace, abiding  
    In Holy Church's shrine ;  
Hail ! nobler Tree of Life, dividing  
    Refreshment all divine !  
The Cup is blessed ; the Bread is broken ;  
    We kneel with bated breath,  
And weep to view each awful token  
    From Calvary's Tree of Death.

We know the Tree of Life is springing  
    On that fair River-bank,  
Where sit the happy Angels singing,  
    Each in his shining rank ;  
For this immortal Fruit partaking,  
    We learn their grand refrain,  
And leave our " de profundis " waking  
    That " in excelsis " strain.

Hark ! Holy Church below rejoices  
    With Heaven's high company,  
Angelic, Archangelic voices,  
    Our God to magnify ;  
All chanting, Holy, Holy, Holy,  
    To Father and to Son  
And Blessèd Spirit, worshipped solely,  
    Three Persons, Godhead One. AMEN.



FOR A SCHOOL SERMON IN A MINING  
DISTRICT.

“ If a man love Me, he will keep My words : and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.”

**L**ORD, Thy lambs, to be defended  
From the serpent's guile,  
To Thy Church Thou hast commended  
By Thy voice and smile ;  
Hence to-day Thy Temple filling,  
Lo, our willing  
Alms we pile.

Thou the Donor art, our Father,  
Thou whose Hand benign  
Giveth all things richly :—rather  
We restore Thee Thine,  
Wealth of commerce, or dark treasure,  
Without measure,  
Of the mine.

Thus in these dear children loving  
Thee the children's Lord,  
Thus for Thee our poor love proving,  
Keeping thus Thy word,  
Seek we grace all grace excelling,  
Thy in-dwelling  
God adored !

O Most Merciful, who deignest  
To forgive our sin,  
And o'er souls forgiven reignest  
Sweetly shrined within,  
Such communion, ere death reach us,  
Teach, O teach us,  
How to win.





THANKSGIVING HYMN AFTER THE  
COTTON FAMINE.

“Lo ! the winter is past ; the rain is over and gone ; the flowers appear on earth ; the time of the singing birds is come ; and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.”

**W**E who late in silent sadness  
Desert pathways trod,  
Utter now with voice of gladness  
Praises to our God.  
Now no more the land shall languish,  
Smit with anguish,  
'Neath the rod,

Not the mammoth engine's power,  
Not the craftsman's skill,  
Warded off in evil hour  
Famine's deadly ill :  
'Twas the gentle law of Jesus  
That could ease us,  
Warm, and fill.



While our Red-rose o'er the waters  
    Wafts her fresh perfume,  
Say, Lancastrian sons and daughters,  
    What restored the bloom?  
Prayer-won blessing sent from heaven,  
    Freely given  
    On the loom.

Mindful of our preservation,  
    Father, Saviour, King,  
Hymns of choral adoration  
    In Thy courts we sing,  
And the first-fruits of our treasure,  
    Copious measure,  
    Gladly bring.





## FOR CHILDREN.

“ The children crying in the Temple, and saying Hosanna.”

**H**OSANNA we sing, like the children dear,  
In the olden days when the Lord lived here ;  
He blessed little children and smiled on them,  
While they chanted His praise in Jerusalem.

Alleluia we sing, like the children bright,  
With their harps of gold and their raiment white,  
As they follow their Shepherd with loving eyes  
Thro' the beautiful valleys of Paradise.

Hosanna we sing, for He bends His ear  
And rejoices the hymns of His own to hear ;  
And we know His heart will never wax cold  
To the lambs that He feeds in His earthly fold.

Alleluia we sing, in the church we love,  
Alleluia resounds in the church above ;  
To thy little ones, Lord, may such grace be given  
That we lose not our part in the song of Heaven.

AMEN.

NOTE. — The copyright of this hymn belongs to the proprietors of “ Hymns Ancient and Modern,” through whose courtesy it is here inserted by the Author.



## CONFIRMATION.

“O mulier magna est fides tua.”

**B**EHOLD these children, Gracious Lord,  
New-born of Water and the Word,  
Whom Holy Church, our Mother fair,  
To Thee the heavenly Bridegroom bare.

For Thou of old didst not disown  
A heathen mother's plaintive moan;  
Although Thy mercy tarried long,  
She conquered, for her faith was strong.

Regard with no less gracious eyes  
Our faithful Mother's tears and cries;  
For these, Thine own, she kneels to pray  
That Thou wilt keep them Thine away.

Thine by a fixed unswerving faith,  
Thine by a love more strong than death,  
Thine own while earthly life is given,  
Thine own in endless life of Heaven.

AMEN.



PSALM CXXVIII.

(*Elegiac.*)

HOLY MATRIMONY.

**B**LESSED art thou that obeyest the Lord, and  
walkest uprightly,  
Keeping His laws divine, fearing to err from  
His ways ;  
Thou in the work of thy hands shalt rejoice, and plenti-  
ful earnings,  
Corn and oil and wine gather in prosperous days.

See the luxuriant vine that embraces the wall of thy  
dwelling,  
Thus shall thine own good wife cleave to thee, fruitful  
and fair ;  
Like the rich branches of olive, the evergreen pride of  
the garden,  
Children thy bread and the rife cup of thy blessing  
shall share.

Thou shalt be blessed of God out of Sion, His own  
habitation,  
Joying in all her weal, seeing her beauty increase ;

Yea, thou shall see thy sons of the third and fourth generation,

And upon Israël His Benediction of Peace.

Glory, O Father, to Thee, and Glory to Thee, O Redeemer;

Glory, O Holy One, Spirit Eternal to Thee ;

Thine was the glory of old ere heaven and earth were created,

Thine is the glory alone, Thine shall it evermore be.





THE LAST HYMN IN A CHURCH TO BE  
REBUILT.

**A** LITTLE while, and then, O Lord,  
Our worship here must cease ;  
We but await the parting Word  
That bids us go in peace.  
In peace ! but, ah, with fond regret  
We leave the ancient fane  
Where we and our forefathers met  
In times of joy and pain.

Thus David passed o'er Kedron's brook,  
Still weeping as he went,  
And turning still a wistful look  
On Sion's shining tent.  
Ah, must this House lie desolate,  
With no adoring throng,  
No matin-bell, no open gate ?  
How long, O Lord, how long ?

Send down the spirit from above  
That moved our sires of old  
To offer with a liberal love  
Their silver and their gold.  
So we, beholding with our eyes  
The beauty of Thy shrine,  
Will bring our thankful sacrifice ;  
All glory, Lord, be Thine.      AMEN.



## FOR THE OPENING OF A SCHOOL-HOUSE.

**C**OME, let us join, in loud acclaim, our voices  
one and all,  
To grace with strains of holy joy this opening  
Festival,  
To praise the Giver of all Good, by whose benignant aid  
And gracious Benediction our Foundation-stone was laid.

Praise Him, who over all our plan stretched out His Hand  
to bless,  
Shielded our labourers from harm, and gave their work  
success,  
Until we "brought the Head-stone forth," and after many  
days  
Now keep our Dedication Feast: to God be all the  
praise!

Praise Him, ye parents, grateful songs ye well may sing  
for this,  
The answer to your frequent prayer, the earnest of your  
bliss—  
To see your sons like comely plants, your daughters pure  
and fair,  
Like polished corners which adorn our Holy Homes of  
Prayer.

Sing out, ye children, evermore your hymns shall here  
    resound,  
Your jubilant hosannas from this lofty roof rebound ;  
Nay, pierce the roof, and cleave the sky, and circle round  
    the throne  
The incense of the fresh young heart which God delights  
    to own.

Good Christians, mingled with your praise let supplication  
    rise,  
That He who grew in Wisdom, yet was God the only-  
    Wise,  
May deign to bless this House, for which we laud His  
    name to-day,  
In generations yet to come, when we have passed away.

Here, hungering after righteousness, may lowly scholars  
    meet ;  
Here teachers, taught by God Himself, sit down at Jesu's  
    feet,  
And glorify with worthier praise the Father and the Son,  
To Whom, with Holy Paraclete, be ceaseless worship done.

AMEN.







## EUCCHARISTIC LITANY.

**J**ESU, unto Thee we call,  
See us at Thy footstool fall,  
Hear us now, and save us all,  
Jesu, Lord, have mercy.

Very God, indeed Thou art,  
Yet within Thy Sacred Heart  
All Thy faithful have a part,  
Jesu, Lord, have mercy.

Very Man, who drawest nigh  
Full of tender sympathy,  
Wiping tears from every eye,  
Jesu, Lord, have mercy.

Saviour, who hast deigned to be  
One with sinful man, that we  
May be ever one with Thee,  
Jesu, Lord, have mercy.

Sweetest Manna, daily given,  
Of eternal life the leaven,  
Bread of God, come down from heaven,  
Jesu, Lord, have mercy.

*SACRED POEMS.*

O when we ourselves present,  
Low in adoration bent,  
At Thy Holy Sacrament,  
    Jesu, Lord, have mercy.

From an unbelieving soul,  
Hard, impatient of control,  
Save, for Thou canst make us whole,  
    Save us, Holy Jesu.

From the hypocrite's offence,  
From presumption and pretence,  
Coldness and irreverence,  
    Save us, Holy Jesu.

By Thy Precious Life-Blood spilt  
To atone for all our guilt  
(Thou canst save us, and Thou wilt),  
    Save us, Holy Jesu.

By Thy Royal Majesty,  
By Thine intercession-cry,  
By Thine Offering on high,  
    Save us, Holy Jesu.

By Thy love, and by Thy power,  
By the Spirit's seven-fold dower,  
By Thine own sweet Presence-hour,  
    Save us, Holy Jesu.

Jesu, hanging on the Rood,  
Jesu, with all might endued,  
Jesu, given to be our food,  
    Save us, Holy Jesu.

Bless Thy Holy Church, and keep,  
In Thy pastures large and deep,  
All Thy shepherds, lambs, and sheep,  
Hear us, O good Jesu.

Visit all who worship here,  
Keep them in Thy holy fear ;  
When they call upon Thee, hear,  
Hear us, O good Jesu.

Bless Thy people, bless Thy priest  
In the Eucharistic Feast,  
Bless the greatest and the least,  
Hear us, O good Jesu.

Help all lowly souls who fear,  
Yet desire to meet Thee here,  
Bid, O bid them all draw near,  
Hear us, O good Jesu.

Break asunder every chain,  
Bring all wanderers back again,  
Ere repentance be in vain,  
Hear us, O good Jesu.

Pardon all our sinful past,  
Let Thy mercy hold us fast,  
Till we see Thy face at last,  
Hear us, O good Jesu.

While we live, not we but Thou  
Live and rule within us now,  
To Thy Holy Will we bow,  
Hear us, O good Jesu.

AMEN.



"THREE IN ONE AND ONE IN THREE." <sup>1</sup>

**U**NA Trina Deitas,  
Ponto, terris, imperas,  
Sacrum tamen audias  
Melos cantuum.

Lux de Luce, cum dies  
Redit, nos illumines,  
Atque caritatis des  
Almæ balsamum.

Lux de Luce, vespere .  
Absolutos scelere  
Impleat, Custode Te,  
Pax cœlestium.

Una Trina Deitas,  
Culta hîc per tenebras,  
Spem fovemus ferre cras  
Sceptrum palmeum.

<sup>1</sup> "Hymns Ancient and Modern," 163.



“PILGRIMS OF THE NIGHT.”<sup>1</sup>

**C**OR meum, fertur cantus angelorum  
Per prata, littus per undisonum,  
Res valdè dulcis hunc inspirat chorum,  
Vita futura, scelus mortuum !  
Angeli Jesûs  
Lucis soboles  
Cantu salutant  
Nocturnos exsules.

Vadimus ultrò carmen auscultantes :  
“ Fessi venite : Jesus invitat ; ”  
Et per tenebras gratè resonantes  
Vocis dulcedo domum nos vocat.  
Angeli Jesûs.

Procul serarum instar campanarum  
Terrâ marique sonat, “ Jesus sum ; ”  
Teque clam quærunnt mille animarum,  
Pastor benigne, pœnitentium.  
Angeli Jesûs.

<sup>1</sup> “ Hymns Ancient and Modern,” 223.

Veniet quies : longum licet iter ;  
 Sol orietur, fugietque nox :  
 Via fessorum osculis finitur,  
 Domusque cœli recludetur mox !  
 Angeli Jesûs.

Tibi solatrix Fides sit, lucendo,<sup>r</sup>  
 Ut super undis luna pelagi ;  
 Mentem dejectam tolles audiendo  
 Quanto te cantu vocent Angeli.  
 Angeli Jesûs.

Fragmenta Laudis superæ canatis,  
 Angeli, vestras per excubias ;  
 Nos laboramus, donec flendi satis  
 Noctemque mundi vincet caritas.  
 Angeli Jesûs.

Stanza not printed in "Hymns Ancient and Modern:"—

Cheer up, my soul ! Faith's moonbeams softly glisten  
 Upon the breast of life's most troubled sea,  
 And it will cheer thy drooping heart to listen  
 To those brave songs which Angels mean for thee.





SAFE IN THE ARMS OF JESUS.

**I**n amplexu Iesûs,  
Sinu tutum Benigno,  
Ejus amore tegendum  
Spiritum meum resigno.  
En, voces Angelorum  
Campos super nitentes  
Super iaspidis mare  
Transeunt ad me canentes.

In amplexu Iesûs  
Careo curis molestis,  
Mundi tentatione  
Insidiisque scelestis :  
Nulla doloris rubigo,  
Nec locus hic dubitandi,  
Quid superest? Brevis hora  
Pugnandi—lacrymandi.

Iesu, carum Tutamen,  
Me propter es Crucifixus !  
In Te Rupe Sæculorum  
Spiritus erit innixus.  
Hic patienter manebit,  
Nocte donec fugiente,  
Crastina lux exhibebit  
Littore se splendente.



“ROCK OF AGES, CLEFT FOR ME.”<sup>1</sup>

“**R**OCK of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy wounded side which  
flowed,

Be of sin the double cure,  
Save from wrath and make me pure.

“Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Thy Cross I cling;  
Could my tears for ever flow,  
Could my zeal no languor know,  
All for sin could not atone,  
Thou must save and Thou alone.

“While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When mine eyelids close in death,  
When I rise to worlds unknown,  
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.”

<sup>1</sup> “Hymns Ancient and Modern,” 150, former edition.





SÆCULORUM, PRO ME FISSA.



ÆCULORUM, pro me fissa,  
Me recondas, Rupes scissa,  
Latere ex vulnerato  
Duplex flumen me lavato ;  
Sanguinis, absolvat reum,  
Aquæ, mundet pectus meum.

Adsum, nil in manu ferens,  
Cruci Tuæ totus hærens ;  
Si nec modus esset flendi,  
Si nec languor obsequendi ;  
Hæc non possent expiare ;  
Tuum, Tuum est Salvare.

Vitæ spiritum trahendo,  
Morte palpebras claudendo,  
Orbes ad novos surgentem,  
Judicemque Te videntem ;  
Sæculorum, pro me fissa,  
Me recondas, Rupes scissa !



“ALL CREATION GROANS AND TRAVAILS.”<sup>1</sup>

**T**OTA creatura gemit : Deus audies  
gementem ;  
Nam totius creaturæ confitemur Te  
potentem.

Pigeat Te tot insontes cum mortalibus dolere :  
Ob peccata cadunt nostra ; fas per preces sit valere.

Intuere, miserescens Patriæ calamitatis,  
Angeloque Mortis dicens : “Siste manum : nunc est satis.”

Fundos, valles, atque prata morbis libera molestis ;  
Procul arvis quæ dedisti lacrymosa cedat pestis.

At memento, Deo Nate, animo benigniore  
Tuâ factos in figurâ, Tuo salvatos cruore.

Annua precationi, thuris instar redolentis,  
In diebus quadraginta usque Cœlos ascendentis :

Matribus pro viduatis, proque liberorum choro,  
Ope speque destitutis, ni peperceris thesauro.

Ut, Te dum quotidiano cantu vocat grex tuorum,  
Greges nostri mille decem gignant in viis agnorum ;

Ut bos fortis ad laborem ñil vietum extimescat ;  
Sileatque vox querentis : atque lues evanescat.

Desque servis post abstersas hujus lacrymas ætatis,  
Trinitas Æterna, Tuæ portionem Civitatis.

<sup>1</sup> “Hymns Ancient and Modern,” 374, former edition.



“SWEET THE MOMENTS, RICH IN BLESSING.”<sup>1</sup>

**T**ER beatæ dulces horæ  
Juxta Crucem, dum divinæ  
Potior in Salvatore  
Vitæ, pacis, medicinæ.

Pronus hic cruentis cerno  
Stellis Gratiam fluentem,  
Meque aspersum cum Æterno  
Pace stabili jungentem.

O beatam Stationem !  
Subter crucem sic jacere,  
Et commiserationem  
Ore languido videre.

Domine, teneto gratum  
Cor Te semper contemplando,  
Dum tuebor invelatum  
Plenum Poculum gustando.

<sup>1</sup> “Hymns Ancient and Modern,” 109.



## JERUSALEM, MY HAPPY HOME.

A SONG BY F. B. P.

*(From Manuscript in the British Museum.)*



ERUSALEM, my happy home, when shall I come  
to thee?

When shall my sorrows have an end? thy joys  
when shall I see?

O happy harbour of the saints, O sweet and pleasant soil,  
In thee no sorrow may be found, no grief, no care, no toil!

In thee no sickness may be seen, no hurt, no ache, no sore;  
There is no death, no ugly devil, but Life for evermore.

No dampish mist is seen in thee, no cold nor darksome night;  
There every soul shines as the sun, there God Himself gives light.

There lust and lucre cannot dwell, there envy bears no sway;  
There is no hunger, heat, nor cold, but pleasure every way.

Jerusalem! Jerusalem! God grant I once may see  
Thy endless joys, and of the same partaker aye to be!



O DOMUS, HIERUSALEM.

IDEM LATINE REDDITUM.



DOMUS, Hierusalem ! beata,  
quando te  
Licebit, infortuniis finitis,  
cernere ?

Sanctorum felix statio, amabilis recessus,  
Nemo in te sollicitus, nec tristis, nec defessus !

Non multitudo vulnerum, morborum, aut dolorum,  
Nec mors, nec iste Sathanas ; sed vita sæculorum !

Nec nubes tibi humida, nec atra nox impendet,  
Sed sancti pares solibus, sed Deus Ipse splendet.

Nec livor sceptrum retinet, nec lucrum, nec libido,  
Non fames, sitis, frigus, at voluptas cuique fido.

Hierusalem ! Hierusalem ! ah, utinam tuorum  
Spectator atque particeps nunc fiam gaudiorum !

Thy walls are made of precious stones, thy bulwarks diamonds square ;

Thy gates are of right orient pearl, exceeding rich and rare.

Thy turrets and thy pinnacles with carbuncles do shine ;  
Thy very streets are paved with gold, surpassing clear and fine.

Thy houses are of ivory, thy windows crystal clear ;  
Thy tiles are made of beaten gold—O God, that I were there !

Within thy gates no thing doth come that is not passing clean ;  
No spider's web, no dirt, no dust, no filth may there be seen.

Ah, my sweet home, Jerusalem, would God I were in thee !  
Would God my woes were at an end, thy joys that I might see !

Thy saints are crowned with glory great, they see God face to face ;  
They triumph still, they still rejoice ; most happy is their case !

We that are here in banishment continually do moan ;  
We sigh and sob, we weep and wail, perpetually we groan.

Our sweet is mixed with bitter gall, our pleasure is but pain ;  
Our joys scarce last the looking on, our sorrows still remain.

But there they live in such delight, such pleasure, and such play,  
As that to them a thousand years doth seem as yesterday.

The vineyards and thy orchards are most beautiful and fair,  
Full furnishèd with trees and fruits exceeding rich and rare.

Thy gardens and thy gallant walks continually are green ;  
There grow such sweet and pleasant flowers as nowhere else  
are seen.

Gemmata lucent mænia lapidibus quadratis,  
Ex margeritis ostia sub sole comparatis.

Corona summa turrium carbunculis clarescit,  
Munitæ auro plateæ, cui lumen irridescit.

Ædes eburnæ, crystallo fenestræ expolitæ,  
Auro retuso tegulæ :—me tædet hujus vitæ !

Nil, nisi quod purissimum, admittunt intra portas,  
Non lutum, non araneas illuvie exortas.

Ah, domus, Hierusalem, jucunda, utinam,  
Finitis his doloribus, te tandem videam.

Deum beati gloriâ tuentur invelatum,  
Gaudent, triumphant jugiter : ah, casum fortunatum !

At nos telluris exsules continue dolemus,  
Perpetuis suspiriis singultibusque flemus.

Commista nostro gaudio pars fellis est amari ;  
Dum intuemur vanuit. Quid restat ? Lacrymari.

Sed tantis illic vivitur deliciis, amore,  
Ut transeat millennium, hesternæ velut horæ.

Pulcherrimæ sunt vineæ, sunt hortuli formosi,  
Qua crebræ virent arbores fructusque pretiosi.

Ex ordinatis saltibus non decidunt capilli,  
Nec sarta rubent alibi, nec flores sicut illi.

There nectar and ambrosia flow : there musk and civet sweet ;  
There many a fair and dainty drug are trodden under feet.

There cinnamon, there sugar grow, there nard and balm abound :  
What tongue can tell or heart contain the joys that there are found ?

Quite through the streets, with silver sound, the flood of life  
doth flow ;  
Upon whose banks, on every side, the Wood of Life doth grow.

There trees for evermore bear fruit and evermore do spring,  
There evermore the angels sit and evermore do sing.

There David stands, with harp in hands, as master of the quire,  
Ten thousand times that man were blest that might this  
musing hear.

Our Lady sings *Magnificat* with tones surpassing sweet,  
And all the virgins bear their part, sitting about her feet.

“*Te Deum*” doth Saint Ambrose sing, Saint Austin doth the like ;  
Old Simeon and Zachary have not their songs to seek.

There Magdalene hath left her moan, and cheerfully doth sing  
With blessed Saints, whose harmony in every street doth ring.

Jerusalem, my happy home, would God I were in thee !  
Would God my woes were at an end, thy joys that I might see !



Sunt nectar et ambrosia, sunt frutices olentes,  
Herbæque magno pretio sub pedibus jacentes.

Sunt cinnamon et saccharum, opesque balsamorum,  
Quis numeret aut sentiat delicias sanctorum ?

Per plateas vivificans susurrat aqua rite,  
In cujus ripis undique frondescit Lignum Vitæ.

Æternum crescunt arbores, et fructibus gravantur,  
Æternum sedent angeli, musasque meditantur.

Stat David, manu citharam tenens, Magister Chori,  
Beatus essem millies, si vox contigat auri.

“*Magnificat*” dulcissimo Maria fundit sono,  
Aguntque partes virgines sedentes subter throno.


Ambrosius, Augustinus, “*Te Deum*” canunt duo,  
Zacharias et Simeon utuntur cantu suo.

Rélicto tandem gemitu, triumphat Magdalena,  
Cum Sanctis, quarum vocibus est omnis via plena.

O domus, Hierusalem, beata, utinam  
Finitis infortuniis, te lætus videam !




OVID FASTI III. 183.

“UÆ fuerint nostri si quæris Regia Nati,  
Aspice de cannâ straminibusque domum ;  
In stipulâ placidi carpebat munera somni,  
Et tamen ex illo venit in astra toro.”



OVID'S CHRISTMAS CAROL.

(Translated.)

SKEST thou what Palace Royal  
Entertained *The Son* ?  
See in yonder *reed-thatched hovel*  
All the rest He won.  
In *the straw* He sweetly slumbered,  
Yet the Babe Divine  
*Rose* from such a couch to *Heaven*,  
*Where the stars do shine.*

PART III.

**Secular Poems.**





## SENEX INTER FLORES.

A MONOLOGUE.

**F**REE, shrub, and blossom, day by day  
I watch them, and care for them all ;  
It gladdens my spirit to see them gay,  
And darkens it when they fall.

I cared but little for these sweet things  
When the sun of my life was high ;  
In the ardour of youthful imaginings  
I heedlessly passed them by.

But in childhood I was wont to walk,  
And sober my natural glee,  
At the side of my father, by serious talk  
In the garden of flower and tree.

How strange, when the body is weary and worn,  
These earlier tastes should glide  
Back to the soul, like the dew of morn  
Returning at eventide !

Not quite the same—for a saddening shade,  
Unknown to those fresh young hours,  
Has stolen in since, and overlaid  
My love for the selfsame flowers.

New fancies too have crept into my mind ;  
They seem to reason and feel ;  
Against the roystering autumn wind  
To utter their mute appeal.

And they bless (I imagine) the faithful hand  
That turns with compassionate touch  
The spray of the fountain where they stand,  
Should the sun burn overmuch.

And I say, "O flowers, who daily prove  
My zeal to nurture and tend,  
Surely ye render me love for love,  
And reckon me for your friend.

As for the world, too fast for me  
Its fashions and changes fly ;  
The world delights in the things that be,  
And I in the things gone by."

So chewing the cud of my passionate life,  
Its mingled bitter and sweet,  
The morning joy, the meridian strife,  
And evening sense of defeat ;

Away to the flowers my steps I bend,  
To the flowers I open my mind,  
And evermore in each listening friend  
A delicate sympathy find.

If I tell a love-story, the bower is husht,  
Then amorous sighs prevail ;  
The rose's cheek is more rosily flusht,  
The passionate lily more pale ;

The warm-hearted sunflower, moved by my speech,  
Forgets to worship the sun ;  
The briony, ceasing her rings to upreach,  
Bends down from the heights she has won ;

Scarce the campanula calms her bells,  
All tremulous with emotion ;  
The breast of my "love-lies-bleeding" swells  
With a rapture of self-devotion ;

If the "early-closers" unshuttered keep  
Their stores, 'tis not for the bees—  
Those murmuring customers all are asleep,  
Not a hum, not a buzz, on the breeze.

But when the crown of my woes I tell,  
And my green leaf changed to sere ;  
From the depth of many a sensitive cell  
Distilleth a diamond tear ;

And rustling thuribles wave around  
Their multiplied fumes, to steep  
In anodyne the re-opened wound,  
And to charm the pain asleep.

Nodding they listen ; and then in turn  
My yearning spirit appease  
With lessons intelligent flowers learn  
From natural harmonies ;

In tempest, and in thunder shocks,  
No less than in sun and rain,  
That this previous life is a paradox  
That the after life will explain.

When pleasure and pain will be found combined,  
Like shadow and light, in the plan  
By the hand of a merciful God designed,  
For the final perfection of man.



## ODE TO A LANCASHIRE SKYLARK.

ÆOLIAN harp, not seen but heard,  
My blessing on thee, tiny bird,  
And on that carol, wild and free,  
Which some good angel teacheth thee ;  
For when the chilly mists of earth  
Around me rise and roll,  
Thy tuneful gladness gives new birth  
To sunshine in my soul.

Long since in fairer Italy  
An English poet learnt of thee †  
To utter music in a tone  
As sweet and soaring as thine own ;  
Of all the songs that charm Leghorn  
He chose to copy thine ;  
What wonder if in clime forlorn †  
We deem thee half divine ?

I look below, 'tis bleak and bare ;  
No myrtle groves are waving there,  
No fireflies flash a mazy sheen  
About their native hedgerows green ;

† See Shelley's "Ode to a Skylark."



I look above, and mists bespread  
What else were paler blue ;  
The dome that arches overhead  
Is hidden from my view.

Then say what beauty moves thee thus  
To chant thy choicest lays for us ?  
For never more melodious rain  
Enlivened that Italian plain  
Than pours from yonder smoky cloud  
Where thou thyself dost hide,  
To flood with music sweet and loud  
Our duller country side.

No outward beauty tunes thy part,  
But love that sings within the heart,  
A love, unconscious though it be,  
For Him whose wisdom fashioned thee :  
And love for her thy feathery mate,  
Who cowers with patient breast  
Five speckled eggs to incubate  
Within your grassy nest.

Thus am I taught to be content,  
And blithe, where'er I pitch my tent,  
Among soft valleys in the South,  
Or at the sterile coalpit's mouth.  
For two heart-joys to me are given  
To cheer me as I roam :  
I own a loving God in heaven,  
On earth a loving home.



## COLOUR.

COPIED FROM NATURE, DECEMBER 10, 1867.



SUNSET in December! See, how fair  
The curtains of the firmament unfold,  
And, save the summer blaze of dazzling gold,  
No charm is wanting there.

Shaded by shifting banks of ghostly sand  
Unearthly gleams of emerald appear,  
As green oasis in Sahara drear  
Might mock some toil-worn band.

Isles of delicious blueness intervene,  
A Delos each 'mid fairer Cyclades,  
Becalmed on waveless depths of orange seas  
That glow and pale between.

The earth-line mingles with a crimson mist,  
Shaded, as toward the south it floats away,  
To luminous purple and severer grey  
By solar beams unkist.

Such colours children view with loud surprise,  
Who stare awhile the day-star in the face,  
Then press their dazed lids, and watch a race  
Of suns in rainbow guise.



## MAXIMILIAN.

**F**ROM West to East the rumour blast  
Of treason and of murder past,  
Till kindred Europe stood aghast  
At slaughtered Maximilian.

Then Gallia laid her pageants by,  
To weep with weeping Germany ;  
And Britain joined the startled cry :  
Alas, for Maximilian !

Alas ! for her, who far away,  
In Europe, ceased not, night and day,  
To intercede, and toil, and pray  
For gallant Maximilian ;

Who meekly left her hero's side  
To crave the aid by all denied,  
His " poor Carlotta "—Empress—Bride—  
The Bride of Maximilian.

Alas for her, if she shall know  
In years to come how Mexico  
Transfixed with parricidal blow  
The heart of Maximilian ;

If ever with unclouded eye  
She sees the curl that used to lie  
Above the forehead calm and high  
Of knightly Maximilian.

Yet her true heart, through all its pain,  
Would throb with queenly pride again,  
To know that honour crowned the reign  
Of peerless Maximilian.

Who scorned with summer friends to fly  
Before the flag of anarchy,  
Who could not conquer, but could die,  
Our martyr Maximilian.

Who fearless faced the rifle ball,  
And fell as Christian heroes fall,  
Undaunted, and forgiving all,  
The Emperor Maximilian !

Let Lopez count his Judas gains,  
Juarez forge his country's chains,  
Unsullied evermore remains  
The wreath of Maximilian.

Restore, ye slaves, for whom he bled,  
The sacred ashes of the dead,  
His fatherland were fittest bed  
For Hapsburg Maximilian.



### THE RHONE AND THE ARVE.

**W**EARY at heart with the passionless rest,  
She broke from her beautiful nurse's breast,  
Fair Leman's foster-daughter ;  
And rippled and raced to the far-stretching  
plain,  
Melodiously murmuring a wild refrain  
That the Alpine torrents had taught her.

Floated her fleecy attire of blue  
On the channel she merrily bounded through,  
Fair Leman's foster-daughter,  
And loudly she laught at the muddy brown hair  
Of the lover who leapt from his mountain lair,  
To sully her radiant water.

The Son of the Snow-white King was he,  
And he glode from his glacier impetuously,  
And shouted with glee, as he caught her,  
That his deed of betrothal was signed long ago  
By an icicle pen on a parchment of snow  
With Leman's foster-daughter.

But she tossed her light tresses in high disdain,  
And bade him flow up to his fountain again  
    Or rue the rash hour when he sought her ;  
Was she to be bartered and bought and sold  
By a dubious document, icy and cold,  
    Lake Lemman's foster-daughter ?

But the roustering river of tawny hue,  
Crept side by side with the virgin blue  
    Of Lemman's foster-daughter ;  
And he laught at her anger and whispered it down,  
Till he changed her bright blue to his own muddy brown,  
    And sullied her radiant water.

So away to the ocean, through shadow and sun,  
( 'Tis an old, old story ) the twain made one  
    Rolled on their mingled water ;  
But the Rhone must be washt in the deep blue sea,  
Ere her turbulent bosom assoiled be  
    From the shame that the Arve has wrought her.





TRANSLATED FROM HORACE, OD. III. 16.

TO MÆCENAS.

**T**HE brazen tower, oak portals strong,  
And watch-dogs baying all night long,  
Had guarded Danaë from wrong  
Of lovers bold,  
If Jove and Venus had not laught  
At pale Acrisius and his craft,  
And cleared a passage "fore and aft"  
By showering gold,  
Gold penetrates the thick array  
Of hired guards, and breaks away  
Through walls of stone, with mightier sway  
Than lightning-flash.  
An overwhelming ruin brought  
The Argive prophet's house to nought ;  
But gold the fatal secret bought  
That caused the crash.  
By gold the Man of Macedon  
Clove city gates, and, marching on,  
All rival monarchs trampled down  
Beneath his feet.  
E'en rough sea captains but await  
Their chance to gorge the golden bait,  
And, turning traitors to the State,  
To sell the Fleet.

Cares multiply, and greed is fed  
 On growing wealth : I justly dread  
 Among the rich to lift my head,

O noble Knight !

Heaven gives the most to Self denied ;  
 So from the Camp of Wealth I glide  
 Deserter-like, and join the side

Whose wants are slight.

Thus richer on my poor estate  
 Than if Apulia made me great,  
 And I among my granaries sat

A needy wight.

Pure flows my little river-flood,  
 I own a rood or two of wood,  
 Nor trust in vain for wholesome food

My harvest-plot.

The Potentate whose glittering hand  
 Rules vast domains of fertile land  
 In Afric, fails to understand

My happier lot.

Though owning no Calabrian bees  
 No vintage mellowing on its lees,  
 In pasturing Gaul no thickening fleece

Like snowy drift,

Yet Want ne'er clamours at my door ;  
 And you, if asked, would give me more ;  
 But I prefer my scanty store

To stretch by thrift,

Than Asian plain annex to plain ;  
 For wants keep pace with human gain :  
 A bare Enough from Heaven obtain

And bless the gift.





## OCTOBER LOQUITUR.

**N**OT mine the luscious green of summer bowers,  
The spring's delicious freshness is not  
mine;  
The swallows leave me; and the humid  
flowers  
Droop scentless in the circling year's decline.

I may not dance, for chilly airs are sighing,  
And withered leaves impede the joyous step;  
I may not dance, while nature lies a-dying,  
Though utter desolation is not yet.

But if I sought a garland to encircle  
My thoughtful brow, what stem was ever bent  
Into a chaplet, be it rose or myrtle,  
More graceful than the hop festoons of Kent?

Go, watch the swarthy vineyard-dressers muster,  
The tendrils of their southern vine to prop,  
And grant that Bacchus never ripened cluster  
To bear the palm of beauty from the hop;

Or owned such merry pickers, bin surrounding,  
To strip the slanting pole with busy hands ;  
I little reck, their tuneful voices sounding,  
If feathered songsters fly to brighter lands.

Brighter—and yet no pine-clad hill surpasses  
Our English woodland, when declining day  
Irradiates the many-tinted masses  
Of autumn boughs, most lovely in decay ;

Likest a life of holy resignation,  
Not wildly gay, nor bathed in useless tears,  
But smiling in untroubled contemplation  
Of dying nature, and the Eternal years.





## THE TALKING WALNUT-TREE.

BY P. OVIDIUS NASO.

*(Freely Translated.)*

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“ I found him garrulously given,  
A babbler in the land.”

*The Talking Oak.*

“ Angliacas quercus docuit me reddere voces  
Dulce loquax : quercum voce minore sequor.”

*The Talking Walnut-Tree.*

---

I.

*The Walnut-Tree stateth her piteous case.*



WAYSIDE Walnut-tree 'am I,  
And guiltless every whit ;  
The mark of every passer-by,  
With every missile hit.

Such punishment might overwhelm  
A wretch condemned to die,  
Should indignation seize the helm,  
And public rage wax high.

But I of every crime stand clear ;  
Unless to yield in season  
Fruit to my owner every year  
Be counted for high-treason.

I've seen in happier times than these  
A generous strife arise  
Which of the fruit-producing trees  
Should win the first fruit-prize.

When farmers came with festive flute  
And garland in their hands,  
To crown the gods who spread such fruit  
Profusely o'er their lands.

When Bacchus saw with glad surprise  
What clusters he possest,  
And Pallas with admiring eyes  
Her olive-berries prest.

And but for stout supporting prop  
That stayed the branches under,  
The too luxuriant Apple-crop  
Had split the tree asunder.

But when we saw the barren Plane  
Enriched with honours, more  
Than any other tree could gain,  
Whatever fruit she bore ;

We Fruit-trees (if that company  
My humble self receives)  
Began to run to wood, and try  
What *we* could do in leaves.

Hence apples now in orchard-bower  
At intervals are seen ;  
Hence grapes are gathered small and sour,  
And olives poor and lean.

## II.

*The Walnut-Tree regretteth her Fruitfulness.*

O that I grew a barren root !  
Far happier my life !  
A speech which, by the way, would suit  
King Agamemnon's wife.

What if I told the Olive-tree  
Or Vine how matters stood ?  
Each dame would slay her progeny,  
Would crush her swelling bud.

Such doleful news as this would make  
The Apple and the Pear  
Their homes within the croft forsake,  
And leave their nurseries bare.

Or if I told black, white, or red,  
Or variegated Cherry,  
'Twould tremble at the words I said,  
And rhyme no more to *merry*.

Nay, I am not in churlish mood :  
Say, are these missiles thrown  
At any tree within the wood  
Producing *leaves* alone ?

No ; you can view them branch and stem  
In unmolested row ;  
They bear no natural cause on them  
To make them suffer so.

## SECULAR POEMS.

My limbs meanwhile are knocked about,  
 For every stone a mark,  
 Until my naked wood peeps out  
 Beneath the ragged bark.

Not because people hate me more,  
 Since everybody knows  
 If other trees my produce *bore*  
 They too would *bear* my blows.

Just so we often see *that* man  
 Defendant in a suit,  
 From whom, if beat, the plaintiff can  
 Extort unbounded loot.

And so *that* traveller only fears  
 The sight of robber crews,  
 Within whose purse a sum appears  
 'Twere ruinous to lose.

And so these stones are thrown at me  
 Because my nuts are good ;  
 While other fruitless trees you see  
 Uninjured in the wood.

## III.

*The Walnut-Tree answereth an Objection.*

You urge perhaps that other shrubs  
 Which grow in soil adjacent  
 Have met with corresponding rubs  
 And usage non-complaisant.

Quite true ; but nothing of their own  
 Has caused their misery ;  
 They suffer thro' the casual stone  
 That glances off from me.

Before you undertake to scoff  
 At this unlikely story,  
 See how those others farther off  
 Retain their natural glory.

If *these* could speak, and understood  
 The cause of their condition,  
 How they would curse me, leaf and wood,  
 For holding this position !

Ah, wretched fate that adds this woe  
 To all my other labours,  
 And makes me odious to the row,  
 A nuisance to my neighbours.

## IV.

*The Walnut-Tree justly complaineth of the Farmer.*

What does the Farmer, pray, bestow  
 On me except this station—  
 What care or toil? To him I owe  
 No mighty obligation.

In the worst field of all his farm,  
 This plot wherein I stand,  
 I grew unaided by his arm  
 On almost public land.

## SECULAR POEMS.

For, fearing I might shade his plants  
    (This senseless charge they urge),  
He pushed me, heedless of my wants,  
    Up to the very verge.

And never pruner clipt the shade  
    Injurious to my fruit,  
Nor delver broke with careful spade  
    The clods that cramp my root.

They see me drooping in the sun,  
    With heat and drought half-dying,  
And bid no cooling fountain run  
    My urgent need supplying.

But when my walnuts crack the rind  
    And show their ripened treasure,  
This side and that, before, behind,  
    They *flog me without measure*.

And wounds terrific intervene,  
    Till I confess with groaning  
There is not much to choose between  
    This *sticking* and that *stoning*.

My walnuts fall ; some at dessert  
    The master's palate tickle ;  
My frugal mistress will convert  
    The larger sort to pickle.



## v.

*The Walnut-Tree envieth the condition of other Trees.*

How fortunate the trees that still  
Year after year afford,  
Afar from blows and usage ill,  
Due tribute to their lord.

They hear no accents harsh and loud,  
No din of rumbling wheels ;  
No steaming dust from heated crowd  
Their verdant leaf conceals.

They please their owner more and more,  
And every fruitful autumn  
Delight with undiminished store  
The soul of him that bought 'em.

Alas, *my* walnuts seldom crown  
His table in their prime,  
For vagabonds *will* knock them down  
Before the nutting-time.

Sad loss for me, and useless quite  
To him who bags the plunder ;  
While yet the shell is soft and white,  
And milky pulp is under.

Yet scamps there are, who yearly come  
To play this empty trick,  
And carry unripe walnuts home  
By dint of stone and stick.

And if my master weighed his share  
 Against the depredator,  
 The portion stolen unaware  
 Would prove by far the greater !

## VI.

*The Walnut-Tree deprecateeth popular Censure.*

When folk behold my naked head  
 Which nature clad so fair,  
 Some say the northern blast has sped  
 And carried off my hair.

And some remark, "how frost has cut,  
 And some, "how sun or hail  
 That luckless Walnut-tree whose nut  
 Is known so oft to fail."

'Tis not the wind, 'tis not the hail,  
 'Tis neither sun nor frost,  
 That makes my widowed boughs bewail  
 The honours they have lost.

No, my misfortune is my fruit ;  
 My being a wealthy tree  
 Is cankering at this sorrow's root ;  
 My riches ruin me !

Nor only me : young Polydore  
 Was murdered for his gold,  
 And Eriphyle furthermore  
 Her gentle husband sold.

The orchard of the Hesperides  
Had flourished safe enough,  
But for that one of all the trees  
Which vaunted golden stuff.

Briers and brambles, only made  
To torture and destroy,  
Of no avenging hand afraid,  
Impunity enjoy.

## VII.

*The Walnut-Tree hinteth at Retaliation.*

I wear no thorn to work men woe  
And tear their coats in twain,  
And they assault me, for they know  
I cannot *turn again*.

Suppose at length vindictive made,  
When next the sun is hot  
And they come crowding to my shade,  
I entertain them not?

Or when surprised by storm they crave  
A shelter from the rain,  
I haughtily my branches wave,  
And let them seek in vain?

No, friendly to my utmost power  
I meet their every need,  
And in return receive a shower  
Of stones for each good deed!

## VIII.

*The Walnut-Tree is indignant at the Farmer's blame.*

When my complaining master came  
 And marked the pebbles thrown, he  
 Observed he held *me* much to blame  
 Because his field was stony !

Collecting them with angry hand  
 He flung them in the lane,  
 Ready for every passing band  
 To fling them back again.

Ah me ! on every side opprest  
 By spite, and split, and splinter,  
 My friends may like the summer best,  
 But I prefer the winter.

For then I naked stand and stark,  
 Obeying nature's fiat,  
 And so present no tempting mark  
 For idle boys to "shy at."

But when beneath the vernal gale  
 I burgeon in my joyance,  
 Forthwith my shower of summer hail  
 Resumes last year's annoyance.

## IX.

*The Walnut-Tree ridiculeth the claim that she is  
 public property.*

What! Say you that my precious load  
 Is "publico pro bono,"  
 Because I join the public road?  
 I boldly answer—O no !

If so, go strip the Olive-trees,  
And cornfields when they harden ;  
Go, cut what cabbages you please  
In your next neighbour's garden.

And since you plead a poor pretence  
Of right to rob this one tree,  
Extend that plea of impudence  
To town as well as country.

Let A purloin a silver dish,  
With none to let or hinder ;  
Let B indulge his harmless wish  
For jewels in the *window*.

Let C appropriate fine gold,  
Or diamonds oriental,  
And seize whatever else is sold  
In shop-fronts ornamental.

No ; goods are safe, for Cæsar lives  
And rules this happy clime,  
And every shop-lifter receives  
The guerdon of his crime.

And not within the city wall  
Alone his laws extend ;  
But every creature, great, or small,  
Has Cæsar for a friend.

But who will be a friend to me,  
Poor persecuted waif ;  
Beaten by daylight, publicly,  
And not one walnut safe ?

No birds will sing or build a nest  
 About my lonely stem,  
 And yet I always do my best  
 To make a home for *them*.

Only a stone will sometimes dwell  
 Wedged in some fork, a victor ;  
 As though he stayed to guard me well,  
 And watch me like a lictor.

## X.

*The Walnut-Tree discloseth her Avenger.*

Some villanies beneath the sun  
 May stoutly be denied,  
 Some crimes in midnight darkness done,  
 Darkness itself may hide.

Against the manglers of my bark  
 A lasting witness lingers,  
 That brown and never-fading mark  
 Imprinted on their fingers.

It is my blood : fall where it may  
 That spot will still remain ;  
 Whole rivers cannot purge away  
 The livid, murderous stain.

## XI.

*The Walnut-Tree contemplateth Suicide.*

Ah me ! how often have I said,  
 When weary to the *pith*,  
 "I would that I were sere and dead,  
 And *firewood* forthwith."

I've prayed the whirlwind hurtling past  
To tear me up by root ;  
The wrathful thunder-bolt to blast  
And char me—leaf and fruit.

I often beg the winds to take  
My walnuts for their mirth ;  
Or half resolve myself to shake  
And rain them down to earth.

That having murdered my increase,  
And sacrificed my gains,  
I might at length enjoy in peace  
The little that remains.

## XII.

*The Walnut-Tree bewaileth her helplessness.  
Her last appeal.*

The traveller picks up a stone,  
And sights with stedfast eye  
The branch at which it will be thrown :  
What courage then have I ?

I cannot fight ; and roots below  
Are such a close restraint,  
I cannot even ward the blow  
By any dodge or feint ;

And so no more resistance make  
Than some poor captive tied,  
And shot while fastened to the stake,  
By a barbarian tribe.

Ay, as the heifer stands amazed  
Beneath the butcher's knife,  
And shudders at the axe up-raised  
To rob it of dear life ;

So, when *you* deem the wanton wind  
My cause of perturbation,  
I'm trembling to my outer rind  
With *mental* agitation.

If I am justly treated so  
No mercy I require,  
Burn down my stump, my branches throw  
To feed a *smoky* fire :

If I am justly treated so,  
Bring axe and bid me fall,  
And take the shell of final woe  
And *crack it* once for all.

But if you know no reason why  
To burn me or to slay,  
As you would prosper, friends, pass by,  
And spare me from to-day.







## PHILEMON AND BAUCIS.

A SIMPLE STORY.

(Translated from Ovid.)

**M**EASURELESS is the Might of heaven ; and limit  
knows it none ;  
The gods above pronounce their Will, and it is  
forthwith done.

In proof whereof an Oak and Lime stand on the Phrygian hills,  
The space within a ruined wall their mingled shadow fills.  
With my own eyes I saw the spot (by Pitheus' order sent  
To Pelops' country, where his sire late held the government) ;  
And not far off a vast lagoon, once rife with busy men,  
But now a reedy haunt for gulls and many a water-hen.

Upon a time came Jupiter, and visited the land  
In mortal guise ; and Mercury, caduceus in hand,  
Accompanied his mighty sire ; his wings were laid aside.  
Before a thousand homes they stood, and piteously cried  
For warmth and rest : a thousand homes the simple boon denied.  
Yet there was one, a lowly roof of straw and rushes made,  
Which entertained the wanderers and tendered needful aid.  
There kind old Baucis and her mate Philemon, old as she,  
Had been united in their youth a loving pair to be ;  
And still within those cottage walls, when their sweet youth was gone,  
They lived and loved together till old age came creeping on.  
Making no shame of poverty, they felt its burden light,  
And sweet contentment always kept their simple dwelling bright.  
Ask you for master, mistress, man, or maid ? No matter : they  
Are only two, and both command, and both in turn obey.

Now when the denizens of heaven knocked gently at their door,  
And bowed their lofty heads to pass the lowly threshold o'er ;  
Philemon bade them rest their limbs upon the couch he set,  
On which attentive Baucis spread a home-spun coverlet.  
Then busy at the hearth she moves the useless ash away,  
And lights with arid bark and leaves the fire of yesterday,  
And fans the flame with aged breath. This done, she chops with toil  
Sere boughs and pine-logs from the roof to make the kettle boil.  
She next a cabbage from the hands of her good man receives,  
Cut in their watered garden, and pares off the outer leaves.  
He no less hospitably bent, lifts down on two-pronged fork,  
From blackened beam whereon it hung, a well-cured side of pork,  
Cuts a small portion from the chine he long had joyed to save,  
And sinks the bacon severed thus beneath the bubbling wave.

Lest the delay might irksome prove, the courteous pair meanwhile,  
With simple entertaining talk the lagging hours beguile.  
There was a tub well-wrought in beech suspended from a hook  
By a curved handle : from its place this tub Philemon took,  
Filled it with water warm and soft, then bared their tired feet,  
And washed away the travel-stains, and soothed the throbbing heat.  
Soft sedge they piled upon a couch supported on a frame  
Of common willow ; underneath, the legs were of the same ;  
And this with hangings they concealed, not often thus displayed,  
Except to grace some festival, yet they were old and frayed,  
And with the couch of willow-wood a famous match they made.  
The gods reclined. The aged dame, with gown tucked up before,  
And trembling hands, proceeds to place a table on the floor.  
Three legs were long and one was short, and so a tile was found,  
And dexterously wedged between the short leg and the ground.  
Thus when the sloping side was raised, and all was levelled well,  
They rubbed it over with fresh mint to give a pleasant smell.  
Then olives of the purest kind, and green with twofold shade,  
And autumn cherries soaked in wine upon the board were laid,  
With endive and with radishes, and clotted cream to spare,  
And eggs among slow embers poached and lightly turned with care.

But everything on earthenware : and after these they lay  
A goblet chased by skilful hand, but likewise formed of clay ;  
With cups of manufactured beech, such as the makers line  
With a smooth coat of yellow wax to glorify the wine.

No tedious delay is here : the viands leave the pot,  
And straightway from the fire upon the table are placed hot.  
The wine a little space removed can boast no wealth of years,  
Yet after the dessert is served a second time appears.  
Ah, here are walnuts, figs, and dates within the rugged shell,  
And plums, and in a basket broad ripe apples sweet of smell,  
With purple grapes in bunches rare, fresh gathered from the vines,  
While virgin honey in the midst of all this bounty shines ;  
The beaming faces of the hosts smile welcome over all,  
And seem to say, " We do our best, altho' that best is small."

Meanwhile the goblet, emptied quite, they see replenished stand,  
And the wine secretly increase unpoured by human hand ;  
The host and hostess terrified, with pallid faces stare,  
Astonished at a sight so strange, and mutter many a prayer,  
With supplicating hands, that their illustrious guests would deign  
Excuse their ceremonial scant and a repast so plain.

There was a gander, only one, the hissing sentinel,  
Which kept their tiny farm from theft, and guarded it right well :  
This bird they now resolve to slay, their visitors to grace ;  
But swift of wing he still escapes and mocks their tardy pace.  
At length, as if entreating help, close to the gods he flies,  
And they, in pity for the bird, forbid the sacrifice.  
" And we are gods," they said, " come down to bring destruction due  
Upon this wicked neighbourhood, but we will care for you ;  
Only consent to leave your home and follow while we guide  
Your steps to find a safe retreat on yonder mountain side."  
Obedient both to the command with trembling limbs they went,  
And leaning on their trusty staves toiled up the steep ascent.

A bowshot from the top they turned, and saw the lower plains  
All deluged by a spreading lake : their roof alone remains.

And while they stand in wonder lost, and mourn the sudden fate  
 Of their drowned friends, they see the cot, their humble home of late,  
 Transformed into a temple fair. Twin columns meet their view,  
 Instead of wooden props ; the thatch assumes a yellow hue ;  
 Pavement of various marble now conceals the earthen floors ;  
 And roofs of glittering gold appear, and richly graven doors !  
 Then spake these words, great Saturn's son ; his voice was kind  
 and low :

“ Say, good old man and worthy wife, what boon shall we bestow ? ”  
 A little while Philemon spake in Baucis' ear apart,  
 And then revealed their mutual wish, and opened all their heart.  
 “ The priest and priestess let us be, your sacred shrine to guard,  
 And since our years together spent no discord ever marred,  
 Let the same moment take us both, that I may never see  
 My darling's grave, and she likewise may never weep for me.”

The gods kept faith : they had their wish—were guardians of  
 the fane  
 So long as it was theirs to live. One day by chance the twain  
 Were standing, quite worn-out with years, the temple-steps before,  
 Telling the story of the place so often told before,  
 When Baucis saw Philemon into branches burgeon out,  
 At the same time Philemon saw his faithful Baucis sprout ;  
 And now, before the lengthening stem o'er their two faces grew,  
 They faltered mutual farewells—“ Dear husband—wife—adieu ! ”  
 And while they spake, a leafy veil was hiding them from view.

But still the Cappadocian shows two trunks which, side by side,  
 Are joined in close companionship that Time cannot divide.  
 I heard the story from the lips of seniors wise and true :  
 Why should they wish to cozen me, or I to cozen you ?  
 And I myself saw garlands gay suspended overhead,  
 So fastening my own fresh wreath upon the boughs, I said :  
 “ The Powers Above descend from Heaven to help the good and  
 kind,  
 And whoso courtesy extends, like courtesy shall find.”



## CAMILLA.

A VIRGILIAN EPISODE.

*Freely Translated.*

HER CHILDHOOD.

Virg. *Æn.* xi. 539.

**W**HEN Metabus, driven from his throne through  
hate  
Born of oppression, issued from the gate  
Of old Privernum, through the perilous fight,  
He bore an infant partner of his flight,  
Camilla, heiress of her mother's name  
Casmilla, partly altered, part the same.  
Seeking the woodland crown of mountain wild  
He carried in his bosom this sweet child :  
But hostile weapons gleamed from every glen,  
And round the pathway scoured the Volscian men.  
Thus, fleeing for dear life, he sees at length  
The Amisenus foaming in full strength,  
Swollen by the rain that deluged all around,  
And overleaping its accustomed bound.  
Prepared at once to swim the waters wide,  
A moment more will see him breast the tide :  
But lo, he pauses ; for that daughter dear,  
His tender burden, moves his soul with fear.

What shall he do? A hundred projects past,  
He hit upon this bold resolve at last :  
It chanced that in his giant hand he bore  
A mighty spear, some knotted oak tree's core ;  
At first he swathed the babe from side to side  
With cork-tree bark, and then securely tied,  
Midway between the iron and the haft,  
The living burden to the oaken shaft.  
Poising the spear he made its balance true,  
Then looked to heaven, and prayed before he thre:  
" O gentle virgin, goddess of the grove,  
Latona's daughter, heed a father's love.  
Protect the child devoted to thee here,  
Who flying clasps the shaft thou holdest dear,  
An infant suppliant—O, accept this care,  
And guide her dangerous voyage through the air."  
Then drawing back his arm, with sudden force  
He launched the weapon on its venturous course.  
The angry torrent roared; but far o'erhead  
The whizzing spear and hapless maiden sped.  
Then Metabus, the foremost foeman near,  
Swims o'er the stream and hastens to the spear ;  
Torn from the turf, he sees, through Dian's grace,  
The babe unurt, and smiling in his face.  
And, since no roof, no wallèd city, gave  
The shelter his proud soul disdained to crave ;  
Thenceforth among the lonely hills he went,  
And spent his days beneath the shepherd's tent ;  
And fed his babe, in cave and woodland lair,  
By pressing from the teat of willing mare  
The milky stream : his little maiden quaff'd  
With pouting lips the invigorating draught.  
And when her tiny feet could scarcely stand,  
He placed a little javelin in her hand,

And o'er her shoulder slung a baby bow,  
 With baby arrows in a glittering row.  
 No golden ornament bedecked her hair,  
 No stately robe the royal child might wear ;  
 But tiger skin, arranged in savage taste,  
 Confined her locks and girt her tender waist.  
 She, thus equipped, began betimes to fling  
 The dart, or round her head to whirl the sling,  
 And strike the Thracian crane in rapid flight,  
 And slay the wild swan in his aëry height.  
 Then through the Tuscan cities many a dame  
 Each for her son preferred an eager claim ;  
 But the wild maiden scorned the nuptial call,  
 And loved her mistress Dian more than all,  
 And laughed—and shook her arrows at the foe,  
 And lived a virgin huntress, pure as snow.

---

 HER WOMANHOOD.

Virg. *Æn.* vii. 803.

NEXT came Camilla, leading from afar  
 Her glittering ranks caparisoned for war,  
 Girl-cavalry beneath a manly mask,  
 Like flowers blooming into plume and casque.  
 A warrior maiden she, of Volscian race,  
 Whose slender fingers never used to grace  
 The distaff, or Minerva's gentle care  
 Of household duties, meet for lady fair.  
 Her chiefest joy to lead the fierce attack,  
 Give blow for blow, then, wheeling, turn her back,  
 And fly more swiftly than the envious wind,  
 And leave the baffled foeman far behind.

So fleet of foot, that where she chanced to pass  
 She scarcely bent the topmost blades of grass,  
 Or bruised the tender heads of yellow grain  
 That only bowed and gazed at her again ;  
 A form, so fairy-like, might almost fleet  
 Above the billow with unmoistened feet.  
 From grange and fields she drew a rustic throng  
 Of youths and maidens as she marched along.  
 The gaping crowd admired, with simple mind,  
 Her crimson mantle fluttering in the wind,  
 A gleam of rounded shoulders ivory fair,  
 The golden clasp that held her flashing hair,  
 The quiver rattling at her horse's tread,  
 The myrtle shepherd-staff with iron head.

---

HER PROWESS.

Virg. *Æn.* xi. 649.

WITH breast half bare, where crimson rivers run,  
 Camilla, quiver-bearing Amazon,  
 Hurls a thick hail of javelins at her foes,  
 Then grasps her axe and deals unwearied blows.  
 Her bow of flashing gold is slung behind,  
 And Dian's arrows rattle in the wind.  
 Or if compelled a moment to retreat,  
 O'erpowered by numbers, turning in her seat,  
 Her bow reversed, she pulls the twanging string,  
 And floats a cloud of arrows on the wing.  
 Meanwhile a band of chosen friends are seen,  
 Italian women, clustering round their queen ;  
 Tarpeia, with her hatchet flashed in air,  
 Iarina, spotless maid ; and Tullia fair ;



In peace and war the first in her regard,  
Once maids of honour, now her body-guard.  
Like Thracian Amazons, beside the stream  
Thermōdon, when the rival sunrays gleam  
On their enamelled armour, as they throng  
Around Hippolyta, or lead along,  
With shrilly war-cries echoing o'er the fields,  
And brazen clashing of their moon-shaped shields,  
Penthesilea, frowning in her car,  
The warlike daughter of the god of war.

Who first, who last, was slain by thee, fierce maid?  
How many warrior forms were prostrate laid?  
Eumenius fell the first : her spear of pine,  
Piercing his chest, protruded from the spine ;  
He gasped forth blood, then falling gnawed the ground,  
And writhed in death about his gaping wound.  
Liris unhorsed, and tugging at the rein  
To raise his wounded charger from the plain,  
And Pagasus extending from on high  
A hand too slow to save, together die.  
To them she adds the son of Hippotas  
Amaster. Now, with all the strength she has,  
She flings her javelins forth ; they light upon  
Tereus, Harpalycus, Demophoön,  
And Chromis. Every spear the virgin sped  
Laid on the earth one Trojan warrior dead.  
In armour strange, on an Apulian horse,  
The hunter Ornitus pursues his course ;  
His shoulders broad arrayed in tough bull-skin,  
His crest a wolf's head with a ghastly grin,  
For hideous jaws are visible beneath,  
Bristling with rows of alabaster teeth.  
Mid-rank he rides, with hunting-blade in hand,

And by a whole head overtops the band.  
Him she encountered when the broken rank  
Had cleared her way, and soon her spearpoint sank  
Within his breast ; then bending o'er the dead,  
In hostile tones the victor maiden said :  
“ How, Tuscan, hast thou made thy vaunting good,  
To hunt us down like wild beasts in the wood ?  
The day is come to prove such language vain,  
And see thee fall, by woman's weapon slain.  
Yet to ancestral shades thou goest down,  
Killed by Camilla's spear—no slight renown !”

Followed two stalworth men of Trojan race,  
Orchilochus and Butes. Face to face,  
Her lance slew Butes, stabbed between the mail  
And helmet, where the iron fastenings fail  
Above the buckler hanging on his left,  
And show the rider's neck through tiny cleft.  
Orchilochus comes next. She turns her face,  
And in a wily circle leads the chase ;  
Then swiftly veering, through the centre rides,  
Pursuing her pursuer ;—on she glides,  
Then rising, with her battle-axe strikes full  
With crashing force through helmet and through skull ;  
His praying and beseeching all in vain,  
A ghastly wound pours forth his reeking brain.

The son of Aunus from the windy pines,  
His home among the cloud-capt Apennines,  
While craft could parry death, held no mean fame  
Among the warriors of Ligurian name.  
Camilla in the fray he chanced to meet,  
And stood aghast, for terror bound his feet.  
Hope of escape or rescue there was none :

All chance of safety lay in craft alone.  
Thus he began : " I see no wondrous force  
Of valour in a girl who trusts her horse  
To bear her scatheless ! Dar'st thou, maiden, stand  
With me on foot and battle hand to hand ?  
Thou dar'st not ! Else right quickly thou shouldst know  
Which side the blast of changeful fame would blow."  
She, maddened by the insult, cast her rein  
To her next friend, and leapt upon the plain ;  
Fearless she stood, nor other arms would wield  
Than naked sword and unemblazoned shield.  
But when he saw the trustful maid alight,  
He turned the rein, and urged his steed to flight ;  
Deep in the charger's side the rowel sank,  
And stained with blood the foam-flake on his flank ;  
Forward he sprang : the recreant rider laught,  
And gloried in the triumph of his craft.  
But, lo ! a voice pursued him o'er the plain ;  
" Boast not, Ligurian ; all thy guile is vain,  
Like sire, like son ; but deem not such deceit  
Will bring thee safe to wily Aunas' feet."  
Thus cried Camilla ; crying thus she ran,  
Outstripped the steed, and faced the astounded man ;  
Then seized the rein, subdued his plunging horse,  
And struck the coward down a bleeding cotse.  
As easily as when below, above,  
The royal hawk pursues a trembling dove,  
And swooping down like lightning on his prey,  
With beak and crooked talons tears away  
Her quivering heart : she dies : and lo ! a rain  
Of bloody feathers fluttering to the plain.

## HER DEATH.

Virg. *Æn.* xi. 759.

THEN might be seen the fore-doomed Aruns wind  
With sharpened spear, and still acuter mind,  
Around the maid, till fortune should bestow  
The lucky chance to strike a fatal blow.  
Where'er she charged, her squadron at her back,  
He crept behind and hung upon her track ;  
Where'er she issued victor from the fray,  
He drew the rein and sidled round that way ;  
And aimed, at every turn, the coward dart  
That sought an open passage to her heart.  
Chloereus, just then in Phrygian armour shone,  
A priest of Cybele in days bygone,  
Spurring a steed encased from plume to tail  
In seasoned hides, o'erwrought with frequent scale  
Of polished steel, and braced at every fold  
And seam throughout with studs of solid gold.  
He, clad in purple robe of dusky hue,  
Shot Cretan arrows from his Lycian yew ;  
And on his shoulder bore a second bow,  
Golden ; a golden helmet pressed his brow ;  
A golden clasp held in a knot behind  
His saffron vestment vaunting to the wind  
Its rustling folds, and showed a tunic graced  
With needlework, and greaves of barbarous taste.  
This man, once seen, she singled out alone  
From all the field, and destined for her own.  
Perchance she longed to see such armour shine  
Within her own Diana's woodland shrine ;  
Perchance that she herself might go arrayed  
In all that gold to hunt the forest glade.

Whate'er the cause, with woman's strong desire,  
She burnt to spoil him of his brave attire ;  
And dared along the hostile line to ride,  
Heedless of danger, blind to all beside.

Then subtle Aruns seized the fatal chance,  
And through the air propelled his sounding lance ;  
By either host its onward flight was seen,  
And all the Volscians gazed upon their queen ;  
But she, unconscious of the peril nigh,  
Nor heard nor saw its passage through the sky ;  
Till deep beneath her naked breast it stood  
And quivered, thirsting for her virgin blood.  
Her trembling guard sprang forward, clustered round,  
And saved their falling mistress from the ground.  
The dying girl, regardless of the pain  
Dragged at the cruel shaft, alas ! in vain ;  
Imbedded firmly in her tender side,  
The iron barb her utmost strength defied.  
She faints, and from her cheeks the purple breath  
Of youth fast fades, her eyelids close in death.  
Yet, ere she quite expires, from all the rest  
She singles Acca, who had loved her best,  
The sharer of her every hope and fear :  
" Thus far," she falters, " Acca, sister dear,  
My own right hand has seconded my will ;  
Thus far, no farther—it will soon be still ;  
My wound will slay me : everlasting night  
Falls fast, and hides thee from my loving sight.  
Weep not, but swiftly bear with faithful heed  
My latest word to Turnus : bid him speed,  
Charge the base Trojan with his utmost power,  
And hurl the bandit backward from the tower :

And now, farewell." Forthwith the charger's rein  
Falls from her grasp unheeded to the plain ;  
Graceful in death she floats serenely down,  
Like blossom blighted by the tempest's frown ;  
The icy hand of fate creeps slowly on,  
Colder and colder, she is almost gone ;  
Upon her bosom droops her queenly head ;  
Her hand unclasps the javelin : she is dead !  
And her reluctant spirit forced to go,  
With groan indignant, speeds to shades below.

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EPIGRAM.

AN, muliebre genus, quæ vos insana cupido  
Urget stultitiâ dedecorare decus ?  
Simplex munditiis, Metabo vivente, Camilla ;  
Sed, patre submoto, vestis amore perit.



PART IV.

**The Birds of Aristophanes,**

IN ENGLISH RHYME FOR ENGLISH READERS.







## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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**T**HIS Translation of "The Birds," carried on at intervals as a recreation in the midst of work in a mining parish, has of necessity been "long in the baking." When it was quite ready for the press, the Translator was introduced by a friend to the recent work of Professor Kennedy. Had he known that the Professor was travelling along the same line in an express train he would surely have resigned his third-class ticket at an early station.

Since the perusal of Professor Kennedy's Translation, although sorely tempted to make corrections here and there, he has, for reasons which will be obvious to one who reads both versions, scrupulously abstained from altering one single word.

He is delighted to find that the two do *not* occupy precisely the same ground. This Translation is more diffuse, and expands the text sufficiently to avoid the multiplication of footnotes without verging on the domain of paraphrase. Moreover, rhyme is used throughout in the ordinary dialogue as well as the

choral portion; and (not the least observable difference) the Anapæstic Tetrameter, despised by Professor Kennedy, is here retained. Without it Aristophanes is hardly himself. Whether, with the embellishment of double rhymes, it runs heavily, the reader must judge.

The Translator begs to acknowledge the great assistance received from the School Edition, with Notes, published by Messrs Parker. These Notes, with "Süvern's Essay," constitute all "The Birds" literature from which help has been derived.

In conclusion he begs to state, in self-defence, that he has made no attempt in the following pages to display an erudition which he does not possess; but simply to reproduce in a dress thoroughly English, for the pleasure of the many who are unacquainted with Greek, an ancient *jeu-d'esprit* of marvellous vivacity.

*February, 1875.*



## ARGUMENT OF "THE BIRDS."

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**T**WO elderly Athenians shrewd, eloquent, and witty,  
Aggrieved by debt and suits at law, forsake  
their native city ;  
By Crow and Jackdaw led they come, with circumambulation,  
Where Hoopoo, who was Tereus once, had fixed his habitation.  
His fellow-birds, enraged at first to see this brace of strangers,  
Are pacified ; and then the pair, escaping farther dangers,  
Propound to the assembled flocks, in language lofty-sounding,  
A project of aggrandisement preposterous, astounding !  
To fortify a city in an aëry situation,  
And seize the kingdom which the gods enjoyed by usurpation.  
The city built, the plan succeeds : rebellion follows treason ;  
The gods deprived of sacrifice at length are brought to reason.  
So birds are henceforth kings of men, their ancient right possessing,  
And far and wide on every side spread health and wealth and blessing.

## THE BIRDS.

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### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

EUELPIDES, } *Two Athenians seeking a*  
PEISTHETÆRUS, } *new home.*

TROCHILUS. *Footman-bird to HOOPOO.*

HOOPOO. *An influential bird, once TEREUS.*

PRIEST.

POET.

DIVINER.

SURVEYOR.

INSPECTOR.

EDICT-MONGER.

PARRICIDE.

CINESIAS. *A dithyrambic poet.*

INFORMER.

IRIS.

PROMETHEUS, }  
POSEIDON, } *Olympian deities.*  
HERCULES, }

TRIBALLUS. *A barbarian god.*

*Messengers, Herald, Chorus of Birds.*

SCENE.—*A wild spot in Attica, with rocks and wood.*



## THE BIRDS OF ARISTOPHANES.

*Gained the Second Prize about B.C. 414.*

### PART I.

EUELPIDES *carrying a Jackdaw*, PEISTHETÆRUS *a Crow*.

EUELPIDES. [*To his Jackdaw.*]

**W**HAT! Go straight on where yonder tree stands out?

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*To his Crow.*]  
Hang you! This creature croaks a right-about.

EUELPIDES. [*To his Jackdaw.*]  
O rascal bird, uncertain where to go,  
Why do we thus meander to and fro,  
Tost like a pair of shuttles in the loom,  
Till, having *lost* our way, we *find* our doom?

PEISTHETÆRUS.  
To think that I Crow-piloted should stretch  
My legs a thousand furlongs, luckless wretch!

## THE BIRDS.

EUELPIDES.

That I Jackdaw-directed, man of woes,  
Should tear the very toe nails from my toes !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But where on earth we now are, I know not.

EUELPIDES.

Could you find out our city from this spot ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

No ! Exekestides would never do it.<sup>1</sup>

EUELPIDES. [*In fresh difficulties.*]

Alas !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Come, take this path, friend, and pursue it.

EUELPIDES.

That man of birds, that poulterer, mad sick  
Philocrates, played us a shabby trick !  
This brace would show us (so he pledged his word)  
Where Tereus lives, who, changed into a bird,  
From *flighty* Athens, is the Hoopoo named :  
And for this Daw an obolus he claimed,  
A braggart bird, like Tharrelides' heir ;  
And three for yonder Crow : a charming pair—  
For pecking is the only art they know ! [*To the Raven.*]  
And now what dost thou gape at ? Must we go  
Over those rocks, for here the path is done ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

And footprint here, by heaven, is there none !

EUELPIDES.

But which way does your Crow appear to guide ?

<sup>1</sup> Exekestides was a foreigner, who was ambitious to be reckoned a native Athenian.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Her caws are inconsistent, first this side  
Then that.

EUELPIDES.

In what direction now ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

She lingers  
To scream, and say she means *to peck my fingers*.

EUELPIDES.

Strange, is it not, that you and I should go  
A-begging *to the crows*, and furnished so  
With guides, in spite of their assistance, stray,  
And be unable to regain our way ?

[*Addressing the audience.*]

For know, all men who hear us now converse,  
We labour under the opposing curse  
To that of Sacas ; alien by birth,  
He pushes in ; we, citizens of worth  
In tribe and kin, without a soul to harry us,  
Are flying off fast as both legs will carry us ;  
Not hating that same city, our fair mother,  
Nor censuring her polity as other  
Than naturally prosperous and great,  
With common rights of *wasting one's estate*  
*At law*. The grasshoppers, from which they spring,  
Among the shrubs a month or two will sing,  
But the Athenians all their lifetime long,  
Chirp at their lawsuits a forensic song.  
We therefore "cut it," and in travelling guise,  
With basket, bag, and flappers for the flies,  
Wander to find some corner we may own,  
Where suits are not and business is unknown ;

There we would settle, there our lives would end.  
 So to the Hoopoo Tereus now we bend  
 Our steps, to ask if he has chanced to find,  
 While flying, any city of this kind.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Ho! Sir.

EUELPIDES.

What now?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

My Crow here all this while  
 Is signalling aloft.

EUELPIDES.

And in like style

My Jackdaw gapes with a communication.  
 Some birds have doubtless made this spot their station.  
 But we shall soon know, if we raise a shout.

[EUELPIDES *shouts*.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

'T's plain you know not what you are about,  
 Make good use of your *leg*, and kick the rock.

EUELPIDES.

You of your *head*—so raise a *double knock*.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Well, strike then with a stone.

EUELPIDES.

So 't pleases you. [*Knocks*.

Ho! ho!

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Why "Ho"? Nay, call the Hoopoo, "*Hoo*."

EUELPIDES.

Hoo! Hoopoo! Will you make me knock once more?  
 Hoo! Hoopoo! [*Enter TROCHILUS*.



TROCHILUS.

Who are knocking at the door?  
Who is it calls so loudly for the master?

EUELPIDES.

Oh, what a beak! Heaven shield us from disaster!

TROCHILUS.

Two bird-catchers arrived, by all that's evil!

EUELPIDES.

The taunt is groundless and not over civil.

TROCHILUS.

You'll hang for it!

EUELPIDES.

What, you suppose us men!  
We're nothing of the sort.

TROCHILUS.

What are you then?

EUELPIDES.

I am a Libyan bird of *quaker*-breed.

TROCHILUS.

Nonsense!

EUELPIDES.

Look at my feet; 'tis so, indeed.

TROCHILUS.

What bird is he, then? Speak!

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Why, look you here,  
I'm of the pheasant tribe, dissolve-with-fear.

EUELPIDES.

But I conjure you, name your savage stock.

## THE BIRDS.

TROCHILUS.

I am a slave-bird.

EUELPIDES.

Has some fighting-cock

Defeated you?

TROCHILUS.

Not so: but when my lord  
Was changed into a Hoopoo, he implored  
The gods to make me bird, that I might fill  
The place of follower and attendant still.

EUELPIDES.

How can a bird need an attendant, pray?

TROCHILUS.

He does, because he was a man one day.  
Sometimes for sardines he may feel a wish,  
And then I run for sardines with a dish:  
Sometimes he craves pea soup, and then I'm seen  
Hast'ning to fetch his ladle and tureen.

EUELPIDES.

This is a footman-bird. Come! footman, faster!  
What are you doing? Go and call your master.

TROCHILUS.

He fell asleep just now—I tell no lies—  
After a meal of myrtle-fruit and flies.

EUELPIDES.

Then go and rouse him.

TROCHILUS.

Well enough I know  
He will be vexed, but to please you I go.

[Exit TROCHILUS.]

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*To TROCHILUS.*  
Hang you! You'll be the death of me through fright.

EUELPIDES.  
Bad luck! My Jackdaw, too, has taken flight  
Through terror.

PEISTHETÆRUS.  
O thou whitest-livered ape!  
Hast thou in panic let the Daw escape?

EUELPIDES.  
Didst thou not fall and lose thy Crow too, eh?

PEISTHETÆRUS.  
Of course not.

EUELPIDES.  
Then where is she?

PEISTHETÆRUS.  
Flown away!

EUELPIDES.  
Oh, then, it wasn't *you* who let her go,  
It couldn't be, Sir Valiant, oh dear no!

HOOPOO. [*Within.*  
"Unsport the oak," and make my passage clear.  
[*Enter HOOPOO.*

EUELPIDES.  
O Hercules! what monster have we here?  
What plumage has he, and what curious crêst,  
With three-peaked top-knot!

HOOPOO.  
Who are making quest  
For me?

EUELPIDES. [*Aside.*  
The twelve gods, in their furious passion,  
Seem to have treated you in sorry fashion!

HOOPOO.

Are you two jeering at me while you scan  
My plumage? Don't, for I was once a man.

EUELPIDES.

'Tis not at you we're laughing.

HOOPOO.

Then at what?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

We can't resist the funny beak you've got.

HOOPOO.

I'm subjected to similar abuse  
By Sophocles in plays; I, great Tereus!

EUELPIDES.

You Tereus! Are you *fowl* or are you *fool*?

HOOPOO.

I'm fowl.

EUELPIDES.

Then, if you follow nature's rule,  
Where are your plumes?

HOOPOO.

All fallen off, alas!

EUELPIDES.

Did some disease bring matters to this pass?

HOOPOO.

No; all we birds, for some mysterious reason,  
Moult, and are fledged again each winter season.  
But tell me who you are.

EUELPIDES.

You mean us two?

A *brace* of men.

HOOPOO.

And of what race come you ?

EUELPIDES.

Ours is the country of the fair triereme.

HOOPOO.

Not jurymen ?

EUELPIDES.

The contrary extreme :

We *abjure juries*.

HOOPOO.

Do they sow this kind

Of seed there ?

EUELPIDES.

In the country you might find

Some little.

HOOPOO.

For what purpose is this visit ?

EUELPIDES.

To seek an audience.

HOOPOO.

Your intent, what is it ?

EUELPIDES.

Because you were a man, like us, one day,  
 Like us, owed money and had none to pay ;  
 Like us, rejoiced to find some clever way  
 To do your duns ; and then, being changed, you took  
 The nature of a bird, to overlook,  
 Circling in aëry height, both sea and land,  
 A bird to *soar*, a man to *understand* !  
 Therefore we two as suppliants are come,  
 Hoping that you may recommend some home,  
 An easy-going city, lined within  
 For rest, as cosy as a beaver-skin.

HOOPOO.

Seek you a city larger than the last?

EUELPIDES.

No; but one more adapted to our taste.

HOOPOO.

You want an *aristocracy*, I see.

EUELPIDES.

Not I! No aristocracy for me!

I hate (though otherwise exempt from blame)

The son of Skellias simply for his name.<sup>1</sup>

HOOPOO.

What sort of city, then, would you prefer?

EUELPIDES.

One where our greatest trouble would occur

After this fashion: In the morn, before

You're out of bed, a friend knocks at the door.

"By all that's best and sacredest," he cries,

"I beg you and your family to rise,

And come to me straight from your morning toilet;

I give a wedding-breakfast—do not spoil it

By a refusal. If you do, to-morrow

I'll scorn your aid, if I should be in sorrow."

HOOPOO.

Good heavens! What *mighty hardships* you would brook!

And you?

[To PEISTHETÆRUS.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Th's kind of thing just "suits my book."

HOOPOO.

Explain.

<sup>1</sup> Aristocrates.

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

To meet the father of a child  
 In whom wealth, youth, and grace are reconciled,  
 And hear him say, "A pretty friend you are,  
 To meet my daughter leaving the bazaar,  
 And not accost her, or present your hand,  
 And seek to win her love! And yet you stand  
 Among our oldest friends."

HOOPOO.

O coward heart,  
 That loves to play this most unworthy part!  
 But such a place there is, and prosperous, too,  
 Beside the Red Sea.

EUELPIDES.

That would never do!  
 The Salamina,<sup>1</sup> if we went there,  
 Might some fine day "pop" on us unaware,  
 With constable on board: that were a pity!  
 Now can't you recommend some Grecian city?

HOOPOO.

Why don't you go and live at Lepreum,  
 In Elis?

EUELPIDES.

That shall never be my home,  
 By all the gods I solemnly protest;  
 Not that I've seen the city, but detest  
 The name of *leper* for Melanthius'<sup>2</sup> sake.

HOOPOO.

Well, there's another city: go and make  
 Opuntii of Locris your abode.

<sup>1</sup> A state galley used to bring prisoners home for trial.

<sup>2</sup> Melanthius was a poet afflicted with leprosy.

## THE BIRDS.

EUELPIDES.

I would not be Opuntius<sup>1</sup> for a load  
Of golden treasure. But, sir, please to tell  
What life the birds lead, since you know it well.

HOOPOO.

For rubbing smoothly on it might be worse :  
Firstly, we have no need to *wear a purse*.

EUELPIDES.

Thus loads of life's *base metal* you decline.

HOOPOO.

In gardens on white sesame we dine,  
With myrtle-berries, mint, and poppy-seed.

EUELPIDES.

You lead a very jovial life indeed,  
A constant *honey-moon* !

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*Musingly*.

Hum ! Ha ! I spy a plan by which you birds  
May rise to power if you obey my words.

HOOPOO.

Obey in what ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

In what ! First cease to stare,  
And gape, and flutter here and everywhere.  
For this is a disreputable way :  
And I allege, in proof of what I say,  
That if the question there with us were heard  
About such flutterers : " Who is *yonder bird* ? "  
Teleas would forthwith have this answer ready :  
" A flighty creature, fickle, and unsteady ;

<sup>1</sup> Opuntius, a one-eyed man, is here ridiculed. (See line 1,294.)



You never know the proper place to find him,  
Now here, now gone, leaving no mark behind him."

HOOPPOO.

Quite true, by Bacchus, there you hit us hard ;  
What can we do ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

One city build and guard.

HOOPPOO.

Birds build a city ! Shouldn't we " make a hash " ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Indeed ! O talker of most arrant trash,  
Look down.

HOOPPOO.

All right ! I follow your direction.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Look up.

HOOPPOO.

I've not a shadow of objection.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Now look around and twist your neck about.

HOOPPOO.

Pleasant, if I should put my windpipe out !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Did you see aught ?

HOOPPOO.

Nothing but earth and sky.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Well, is not this the *Birds' Pole* ?

HOOPPOO.

Birds' Pole ! Why ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

For "Pole" read space ; and space being much frequented  
 By birds, the name was naturally invented.  
 Which, if at once you wall and fortify,  
 " Birds' Pole " will thus become Birds' *Folity*.  
 So will you rule men like the locust nation,  
 And waste the gods with Melian<sup>†</sup> starvation.

HOOPOO.

But how ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

The air is in the midst, you know,  
 Between the heavens above and earth below.  
 Now just as we, to Delphian temple bound,  
 Must beg a passport through Bœotian ground ;  
 So, when mankind would offer sacrifice,  
 Unless the gods will pay you your own price,  
 You won't permit one savoury whiff to clear  
 Your foreign city in the atmosphere.

HOOPOO.

Hurrah ! Hurrah !  
 By earth ! by snares ! by clouds ! by nets so fine !  
 I never heard a daintier design.  
 Done ! I will found this polity with you,  
 If all the other birds consent thereto.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Who then shall make the explanatory speech ?

HOOPOO.

Yourself ; for I've contrived in time to teach  
 The erst barbarian birds I live among  
 To speak and understand the Attic tongue.

<sup>†</sup> Alluding to the reduction of Melos by famine, two years before Aristophanes wrote " The Birds."

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But how can you assemble them?

HOOPOO.

With ease.

I hop forthwith within this grove of trees ;  
 Then having roused my own dear nightingale,  
 We summon them : and as they hear our hail,  
 Whole flocks will hasten hither at full sail.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

O dearest of the birds, make no delay :  
 Go, I entreat you, with what speed you may ;  
 Retire within the grove, as you propose,  
 And rouse your nightingale from her repose.

[Exit HOOPOO.]

## PART II.

HOOPOO. [*Chants within.*]

Come, sweetest mate, arise, awake ;  
 Shake off thy silent slumbers ;  
 Set free, dear singer, for my sake,  
 The charm of thy mystic numbers.

Pour forth through tawny throat divine  
 The strain a world's delight is,  
 Our common sorrow, mine and thine,  
 The death of long-wept Itys.

Unbroken thrills the echo fair,  
 Through shade of leafy yews,  
 Unbroken through the listening air,  
 Up to the throne of Zeus.

Where Phœbus, with the locks of gold,  
 Takes up his ivory lyre,  
 And harps the harpings manifold,  
 Thine elegies inspire.

Then bids the choirs celestial sing,  
 In answering intonation ;  
 Till heaven itself is chorusing  
 Thy musical lamentation.

[*The Nightingale sings.*]

PEISTHETÆRUS.

O Zeus, O Lord, what a brave song is this !  
 It steeps the very grove in honey-bliss !

EUELPIDES.

You, sir !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

What now ?

EUELPIDES.

Pray stop your prating vein ;  
 The Hoopoo tunes his note to sing again.

HOOPOO.

[*Within.*]

Ερροποποποποποποποπο !

Io, io, ito, ito, ito ito !

Hither, fly hither, companions mine,  
 On the fat cornlands ye who dine :  
 Ye whose myriad families eat  
 Seeds of barley and seeds of wheat.  
 Hither, come hither, and be not mute,  
 Warble in flying your soft salute ;  
 As many as chirp and sing around  
 The upturned clods of fertile ground,  
 Twittering so,  
 Tio, tio, tio, tio, tio, tio, tio, tio.

And all who live in your gardens merry,  
And feed among boughs of the ivy-berry ;  
Ye too who batten and shelter thus  
On the mountain-olive and arbutus,  
List to my song ; fly hither quick,

Trioto, trioto, totobric.

Ye who in hollows and marshy flats  
Are hunting the swarms of stinging gnats,  
And ye o'er dewy meads who run,  
And the lovable plains of Marathon ;  
Thou, too, bird of mottled feather,  
Woodcock, woodcock, hasten hither !  
And ye who with the halcyons sweep  
Over the surge of the billowy deep,  
Hither away to the news we bring,  
For all our tribes are gathering ;  
All the tribes of the long-necked birds  
Flock to listen to the words  
Of a senior keen of mind,  
Who is come, as you will find,  
To discover notions new  
And unheard-of deeds to you.  
Therefore thus I perch and call  
To the conference one and all.  
Hither, hither, hither, hither, quick !  
Toro-toro-toro-toro-tic !

Kikkabau ! kikkabau !

Toro-toro-toro-toro, lilililix !

## PART III.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

See'st thou a bird?

EUELPIDES.

By Phœbus, no, not I,  
Though all this time I've gaped up at the sky.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

So then it seems the Hoopoo went in vain  
Into the grove and mocked the Curlew's strain.

FLAMINGO. [*In the distance.*]Torotix, torotix. [*Enter HOOPOO with FLAMINGO.*]

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Lo, our friend! and I declare some other bird to pay a visit.

EUELPIDES.

Sure enough a bird! What is he? Not the peacock's  
plumage, is it?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

That our friend himself shall tell us. What bird is it  
comes this way?

HOOPOO.

This is not a *common-fledgeling* such as you see every day,  
But a holiday bird.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

How fine and *flame-coloured* he is, by jingo!

HOOPOO.

Not at all unlikely, is it, when his title is FLAMINGO?

EUELPIDES.

Prithee, look you here!

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Why call me?

EUELPIDES.

Here's a bird of different nature.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Different indeed ! I warrant this is some outlandish creature.

What can be this bird ridiculous, dunghill-strutting, omen-crowing ?

HOOPOO.

He is called the *Persian*.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Persian ! Hercules, 'tis well worth knowing How he flew without his *camel* all the way from east to west.

EUELPIDES.

Lo, another bird approaches with an elevated crest.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [To the HOOPOO.

Strange ! Then you are not the only Hoopoo : here's a second one !

HOOPOO.

He's the son of Philocles, and Philocles is Hoopoo's son. Hence you see I'm his grandfather, as it often comes to pass, Kallias begets Hipponicus and Hipponicus Kallias.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Kallias he is for certain ; since his plumage is so scant.

HOOPOO.

Being noble, he is therefore plucked by every sycophant ; And his *lady-birds*, moreover, know the way to pluck him well .

PEISTHETÆRUS.

O Poseidon ! here's another ; isn't this a gorgeous swell ? What is his name ?

HOOPOO.

He's called the Glutton.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

That must be Cleonymus !  
Or is there a second glutton added to the one with us ?

EUELPIDES.

How can this be *our* Cleonymus, since his top-knot is  
unshorn ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Tell me, by the way, the reason why these mountain-  
crests are worn.  
Are they coming to the races ?

HOOPPOO.

Rather say that they prefer  
*Mountain-crests* in Carian fashion for security, good sir.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

What a plague of birds, Poseidon ! See their mingled  
masses pour.

EUELPIDES.

Such a cloud, O King Apollo, I can scarcely see the  
door.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Here a Partridge and a Halcyon, there a Woodcock and  
a Teal.

EUELPIDES.

Who is *that* bird close behind her ?

HOOPPOO.

If I must his name reveal,  
'Tis the Razor-bill.

EUELPIDES.

What say you ? Can a barber be a bird ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Is not Spörgilus an instance ? Here's the Owl, upon  
my word.



EUELPIDES.

Owl,<sup>1</sup> say you? What dolt to Athens ever-thinks of carrying owls?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Enter Jay, Dove, Lark, and Buzzard; Pigeons too, and Water-fowls,  
Kite, Hawk, Cuckoo, Ringdove, Redstart, Porphyry, and Crimson-Foot,  
Ocean-Eagle, and Tree-Creeper, Falcon, Finch, and Diving-Coot.

EUELPIDES. [*Taking alarm.*]

Oh dear, what flocks of birds!  
Blackbirds, I declare!  
How they chirp and chatter,  
Hopping here and there!  
You and me they menace,  
Else what makes them thus  
Gape with beaks distended,  
Glowing at us?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yes, I really think it is so.

CHORUS OF BIRDS.

Popopopopopou!

Please inform me who has called me, where he feeds,  
and when, and how?

HOOPOO.

Here I am, the same as always. I desert my friends?  
no, never!

<sup>1</sup>The image of the owl, the bird of Pallas, was as common at Athens as bears at Bern. So that carrying owls to Athens would correspond to our own proverb about carrying coals to Newcastle.

## THE BIRDS.

CHORUS.

Tititititi! tell me what kind message you deliver.

HOOPPOO.

One that's public, prudent, righteous; pleasant and expedient is it:

For two men, shrewd calculators, have arrived here on a visit.

CHORUS.

Where, O where? What say'st thou?

HOOPPOO.

This—that hither from the haunts of man,  
Have arrived two reverend persons to divulge a monster plan.

CHORUS.

O thou most transcendent sinner seen since I was  
*hatched a bird!*

What is this that thou art saying?

HOOPPOO.

Don't be startled at a word.

CHORUS.

Say what evil thou hast done me.

HOOPPOO.

I have entertained two men  
Who were eager for this meeting.

CHORUS.

Thou *hast* done this action then?

HOOPPOO.

Yes, and I am glad I've done it.

CHORUS.

Also are this precious brace  
Here among us at this moment?

HOOPOO.

Yes, if I am in this place.

CHORUS.

Alas, alas ! we are betrayed !  
 Ah, treatment most unholy !  
 For one who show of friendship made  
 Has played the traitor wholly.  
 Erewhile disporting at our side  
 He pecked the selfsame plain.  
 But now, our ancient rules defied,  
 And bird-oaths all in vain,  
 He has enticed me to the snare,  
 Betrayed me to the foe,  
 Accursèd race ! without compare  
 The bitterest I know.

But there's time enough hereafter to adjust accounts with  
 him,

Now, I vote, we pay these seniors and divide them limb  
 from limb.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*In consternation.*]

So we're done for !

EUELPIDES. [*Savagely.*]

'Tis your doing ! yes, the blame is all your own.  
 Wherefore bring me from my country ?

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*Coolly.*]

I dislike a tour alone.

EUELPIDES.

To my bitter weeping.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Nonsense ! you are daft to make this rout :  
 For your *weeping* must be *ended* when your *eyes are both*  
*torn out.*

CHORUS.

[*Bellicosely.*]

Ha ! ha ! begin the fierce attack,  
 Lead on the bloody charge !  
 Surround the foe, a circle make  
 With outstretched pinions large.  
 For these two mortals are our prey,  
 A fierce revenge to wreak,  
 Till they shall groan their souls away  
 Beneath our torturing beak.  
 No shadowy cave on mountain-side,  
 No spot in the foaming sea,  
 No cloud that in æry height doth ride  
 Shall shield their lives from me.

Let us now delay no longer, but proceed to pluck and  
 bite ;

Where's the General of Division ? Let him forthwith  
 lead the right.

EUELPIDES.

It is come to this ! Ah, whither can I fly ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Stand still, I say.

EUELPIDES.

Yes, till I am pecked to atoms.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

How d'ye think to escape them, pray ?

EUELPIDES.

Ah, I know not !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Then I'll tell you, we must make a plucky stand,  
 And engage in battle, holding earthen pitchers in our  
 hand.

EUELPIDES.

How will pitchers help?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

The Owl will see her portrait and forbear.

EUELPIDES.

Ah, those crooked-taloned creatures——

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Seize the *spit* that's lying there,  
Hold it with firm grasp before you.

EUELPIDES.

Ah, but how about our eyes?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Take a *cup*, or *vinegar-saucer*, and protect them buckler-wise.

EUELPIDES.

Clever fellow, you have planned it like a general of  
forces ;  
Nicias himself out-shooting in invention of resources.

CHORUS.

Ellelelen ! with beaks presented, charge ! delay not at  
the call.

Drag them, pluck them, strike them, skin them. Break  
their pitchers first of all.

HOOPOO.

[*Interposing.*

Vilest of all savage creatures ! Tell me why this fell  
intent,

Suffering no provocation, to destroy the innocent ?

Will you tear two men in pieces in unreasonable strife,

When they both are fellow-tribesmen and near kinsmen of  
my wife ?

CHORUS.

Why should we in pity spare them more than wolves and  
beasts of prey?  
Could we ever punish any dyed with blacker crimes than  
they?

HOOPOO.

What if enemies by nature, yet in disposition friends,  
They are come to teach us something which will vastly  
serve our ends?

CHORUS.

How can we expect to gather any useful lore from those  
Who have been for generations our hereditary foes?

HOOPOO.

Yet the wise may many lessons from their enemies  
procure;  
As an instance, take the proverb, "Make assurance  
doubly sure."  
This your *friend* would never teach you in whatever  
way you turn it;  
But your *enemy* will straightway by *experience* make you  
learn it.  
Here's a case in point: their foes and not their friends  
compel the States  
To expend their wealth and labour in providing walls  
and gates,  
And obtaining armèd vessels; yet such preparations are  
Means of safety for the children, house, and goods in  
case of war.

CHORUS.

Well, I think it may be useful first to hear what they  
propose,  
For we *may* learn something clever though the teachers  
be our foes.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*Aside to EUELPIDES.*

As their fury seems to slacken, comrade, you may stand  
at ease.

HOOPOO. [*To Chorus.*

Yes, and gratitude should teach you in my case to try  
and please.

CHORUS.

Granted : but, indeed, we never did oppose you  
heretofore.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*To EUELPIDES.*

Signs of settlement pacific are appearing more and more,

Therefore you

File arms ! Your dish and saucers two,

A barricade !

Then screened by it,

We shoulder spit,

Spear ready-made ;

And o'er the rim,

Like sentries grim,

Bold face display,

And never, never run away !

EUELPIDES.

All vastly fine ; but should we chance to perish,  
Where shall we find a grave ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

The Ceramicus such a pair would cherish,

And we should surely have

A public funeral at the city's cost,

For (so we'll tell the generals) we lost

Our lives contending with a hostile band

In *Feather-land*.

*THE BIRDS.*

CHORUS.

Fall back ! and as before form line,  
 Your passion steady !  
 As soldiers on their spears recline,  
 Rest, but be ready !  
 And let us ask these men to tell their name,  
 And what their errand is, and whence they came.  
 Hoopoo, I'm calling you ! Hallo !

HOOPOO.

Well, what do you desire to know ?

CHORUS.

Who they are—whence come these fellows.

HOOPOO.

Guests of mine from clever Hellas.

CHORUS.

What mischances  
 To the jays  
 (As we might say)  
 These gentry drew ?

HOOPOO.

Fervent fancies  
 For your ways,  
 To dwell, and stay  
 For good with you.

CHORUS.

Indeed ? Report their words in brief.

HOOPOO.

Such words as beggar all belief.



CHORUS.

Sees he some gain here worth the stay,  
Whereby he hopes to find a way  
To compass through our aid his ends  
In conquering foes or helping friends ?

HOOPOO.

He paints prosperity too great  
For one to credit or relate,  
Asserting that the earth and air  
Above, below, and everywhere,  
Belong to you, your just dominion ;  
And I incline to this opinion.

CHORUS.

Do you consider him insane ?

HOOPOO.

Oh, no ! he has a power of brain.

CHORUS.

Some spark of shrewdness in his mind ?

HOOPOO.

The subtlest fox that you could find,  
Dodger, trickster, sharper, cheat,  
Polished, perfect, and complete.

CHORUS.

Bid him utter, bid him utter this communication,  
Since you spake my pinions flutter with anticipation.

HOOPOO.

[To PEISTHETÆRUS and EUELPIDES.

Now you, and you, sirs, take your weapons back,  
Suspend them for good-luck behind the jack  
Within the chimney corner, and commence  
The reason why I called this conference.

## THE BIRDS.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

By Phœbus, they shall hear no word from me,  
 Unless to that agreement they agree  
 Which was agreed, to put an end to strife,  
 Between the monkey-armourer and his wife :  
 " Neither to pluck nor claw in any wise——"

CHORUS.

No, no, of course not.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

I allude to eyes.

CHORUS.

Agreed !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Then seal the compact with an oath.

CHORUS.

Well, if I keep it, may I conquer both  
 By vote of audience and the judges all.<sup>1</sup>

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yes, that will do.

CHORUS.

But should I ever fall  
 From my agreement, may the prize be won  
 By barely a majority of one.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Hear, all ye people. Let this armed array  
 Put up their weapons now and march away ;  
 But let them all observe with watchful care  
 The notice-boards and what we publish there.

[*Exeunt populus.*

<sup>1</sup> At the festival of Dionysia five judges were chosen by ballot to award the prize to the best Tragedy and Comedy.

## PART IV.

## CHORUS.

Mankind are traitors every way,  
 By birth and education ;  
 Yet speak, if knowing, as you say,  
 Some plan to aid our nation.  
 It may be you have seen in me  
 Advantages omitted,  
 As they may very likely be  
 By one so slender-witted ;  
 But you can see them, so declare  
 Whatever you have spied,  
 And know that you yourself shall share  
 The blessings you provide.

But why you are come thus far from home ; induced by  
 what mental persuasion ;  
 Explain and be bold, for till all be told the truce shall  
 not suffer invasion.

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

I've a speech in the making : nought hinders the baking :  
 by heaven, I'm hot to begin it.  
 Boy, bring me a fillet, and water (don't spill it) to make  
 a lustration this minute.

## EUELPIDES.

Are we going to sup ? or what is now up ?

## PEISTHETÆRUS. [To EUELPIDES.

I desire to commence my oration,  
 Something ancient and gross, rhodomontade verbose, to  
 astonish the nerves of the nation. [To the Birds.  
 Thus, friends, for your sake, lamentation I make, who  
 formerly having been reckoned  
 Kings——

CHORUS.

Kings, do you say? Who acknowledged our sway?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

I for one, and my friend for a second;  
Nay, all things, e'en Zeus; for I mean to produce good  
proof, which I hope you will swallow,  
Of anterior birth to Sun, Saturn, and Earth——

CHORUS.

What, to Earth?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yes, to Earth, by Apollo!

CHORUS.

By Zeus! not one word of all this have I heard.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Why not? You are slow at your learning,  
And from morning to night all business you slight, when  
your Æsop you ought to be turning;  
He has solemnly stated, ere earth was created, that a  
Lark first rose in the stillness,  
And it came to pass, that her father, alas! fell ill, and  
died of his illness.  
But the *earth was not*, so she found no spot for burial  
devices,  
And he lay in state till the fifth day late, and matters  
came to a crisis.  
Till the poor Lark gave her own head for a grave, and  
therein she buried her father.

EUELPIDES.

So this father, dead, still lies buried at Head!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The village of Attica mentioned is Kephalaë, which means *head*.  
Perhaps read: "Still lies at Spithead."

HOOPOO.

He reasons *à fortiori*  
That the Birds by birth being before the Earth, were  
*before the gods* in story,  
And the kingdom is theirs as the *most ancient heirs* : no  
argument could be stronger.

EUELPIDES.

By Apollo ! your right must be won by fight ; so keep  
your *beaks* in good order :  
For I cannot suppose, without some blows, King Zeus  
will cross the border,  
And resign his exchequer to *King Woodpecker* !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yet the truth of my allegation  
That the rulers of men were not gods, but Birds then,  
who were kings in their generation,  
I can easily show by proofs that you know and within  
your own observation.  
Let me claim your attention while foremost I mention  
*the Cock*, who will surely amaze us,  
For he called the throne of Persia his own ere Darius  
and Megabazus,  
And he takes by reversion the title of *Persian*,<sup>1</sup> a sign  
of his ancient dominions.

EUELPIDES.

And therefore in statē, like a monarch great, *he plumes*  
*his royal pinions*,  
Or lifts his head with a *dignified tread*, and proudly carries  
upon it,  
Alone of his sect, the *comb erect*, in the shape of a *Persian*  
*bonnet*.

<sup>1</sup> The dunghill cock was in Aristophanes' days called the *Persian bird*, in the same way as a kindred brood recently imported are called Cochin China.

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

For his influence then, and his power over men, a fact to  
 this present day vouches ;  
 When in earliest morning he crows out his warning, *all*  
*leap up to work* from their couches,  
 Each after his manner, the tinner, the tanner, the cobbler,  
 the bather, the baker,  
 The burner of tiles, and shields-of-all-styles-and-musical-  
 instrument maker.  
 They have no time to lose ; so they slip on their shoes,  
 and away in the dark.

## EUELPIDES.

I can tell you  
 A tale *à propos*, for I lost by *his crow*, to my sorrow, a  
 cloak of much value.  
 At a feast in the city I drank, more's the pity, a little too  
 much without knowing,  
 So I dozed like a sinner till, just before dinner, this  
 rascally Cock began crowing,  
 Then I woke in a fright, thought I'd slept all the night,  
 and set off to Alimys trotting.  
 When, peeping about, the town wall without, a thief on  
 his rounds garotting  
 Gave me such a whack with his club, on my back, that I  
 fell and was going to cry "*murther*,"  
 When he snatched off my cloak, and concluded the joke,  
 for he did not molest me further.

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

Greeks acknowledged the right of their sovereign *the*  
*Kite*, and *he was the king* of that nation.

## HOOPPOO.

Of the Greeks do you say ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

And he taught them the way to *salaam* to each Kite his relation.

EUELPIDES.

Yes, and I, luckless wight, once salaamed to a Kite, and gaping his swift flight to follow,  
I leant too far back, and managed, alack ! my very last sixpence to swallow,  
Then sneaked home the worse for an empty purse.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But again over Egypt and Sidon  
And the country around the *Cuckoo* is found his governing powers to have tried on ;  
And wherever, look you, *their king sang* " *Cuckoo,*" then all the Phœnicians early  
In the *cornfields* would meet to harvest the wheat and gather the bearded barley.

EUELPIDES.

Whence beyond all doubt the proverb, "Come out to the plain ; 'tis the Cuckoo, Phœnicians."

PEISTHETÆRUS.

And their rule, it is clear, was so severe, that where men held royal commissions,  
As they did, by lease, in cities of Greece, Agamemnon or Menelaus,  
A bird used to hop on *their sceptre-top* for *your* share of what folk might pay us.

EUELPIDES.

This fact, I must own, was to me unknown, and it often struck me with wonder

When some Priam<sup>1</sup> appeared, with a *bird upreared*, among  
 the tragedians yonder,  
 Who perched at his ease, and when Lysicrates took a  
 bribe, would observe it and ponder.

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

Now this next proof I call the most cogent of all, that  
 Zeus in his character regal  
 Always bears on his pate, in solemn state, a bird—the  
*majestic Eagle*;  
 And his daughter an *Owl*; while as slave to the fowl,  
 Apollo sustains a *Falcon*.

## EUELPIDES.

But wherefore, I pray, this curious array? (By Ceres!  
 how glibly you talk on.)

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

When each offerer stands, and puts into the hands of the  
 gods (for 'tis thus they adore them)  
 Any morsel that's nice of the sacrifice, that the *Birds may*  
*devour it before them*.  
 And nobody swore by a god before, but the *name of*  
*some Bird* repeating,  
 As Lampon to this day calls a *Goose* (people say) to  
 witness when he is *cheating*.  
 So sacred and great was the Royal State universally held  
 by this meeting!

But now they will not own you,  
 You are dolts and fools and mad;  
 And like *scarecrows* they will stone you  
 Where stones are to be had;

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the actor who personified Priam was noted for his avarice.



Even near the sacred temples,  
 Each wily fowler sets  
 His gins, and snares, and lime twigs,  
 And traps, and wires, and nets.  
 And when they thus have caught you,  
 They sell you *in a lot*,  
 And the customers who bought you  
*Feel how much breast* you've got.  
 This scurvy treatment brooking,  
 You might expect some peace,  
 And being consigned to cooking  
 To be *roasted* and to *cease*.  
 No ! they get vile cheese and grate it,  
 Oil, vinegar, and cress ;  
 They then manipulate it  
 To a greasy, sticky mess ;  
 And when at length 'tis boiling,  
 They take the *reeking stew*,  
 As if you were but *carrion*,  
 And *dash it over you*.

## CHORUS.

O man, thy words are hard to bear ;  
 So very hard indeed,  
 It makes my spirit bleed  
 To know how base my fathers were.  
 For they abandoning the right  
 Their ancestors entailed,  
 In my day it has failed,  
 And brought me to a wretched plight !  
 But thou art come by chance divine  
 To save. So, while I live,  
 Into thy charge I give  
 My fledgelings, and whatever else is mine.

But teach us, being here, what course we must steer ; for  
 life is not worth retaining,  
 Unless, as before, we completely restore to the Birds  
 their position of reigning.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

My first exhortation is *centralisation* ! One *Bird-City*  
 I would set eyes on !  
 You must then fortify all space between sky and earth,  
 to the circling horizon,  
 With bricks, every one baked hard in the sun, like the  
 blocks of the Tower of Babel.

HOOPOO.

O Kebrion old ! O Porphyry bold ! Ye giants renowned  
 in fable !  
 How grimly will frown our fortified town !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Then, as soon as the battlements rise, you  
 Ask Zeus to restore your dominion of yore ; which re-  
 quest, if his godship denies you,  
 And cannot see why he should "eat *humble pie*," you  
 issue a proclamation  
 Of a grand *crusade* and a strict blockade against him  
 and his every relation.  
 And sternly refuse Poseidon or Zeus a passage *viâ* your  
 portals  
 When their godships are fain, in an amorous vein, to  
 visit their loves among mortals.  
 Their Alkmēnes, Alopes, Semeles ; and should they per-  
 sist in scorning  
 Your royal command, fix upon them a brand which will  
 furnish the rest with a warning.

You must also send word by a herald-bird to mankind with the following advices :

That the Birds again have begun to reign, and from henceforth *require sacrifices* :

So the gods must be reckoned, not *first*, but *second* ; and say they should class and assign them,

Bird and god two and two, as 'tis seemly to do, and similar natures incline them.

Who for dame Aphrodite performs holy rite, he must offer the *Coot wheaten rations* ;

Who gives Neptune a lamb, must first make his salaam to the *Duck* with his *barley oblations*.

Or, if Hercules he is wishing to please, the *Gull* must have *honey cakes* kneaded ;

If a ram one should bring unto Zeus as his king, let him know that *King Wren* has succeeded,

For whom, before Zeus, it is right to produce a *gnat of the masculine gender*.

EUELPIDES.

A sacrificed gnat ! Well, I'm tickled at that, in spite of the Thunder-sender.

HOOPOO.

But how will mankind ever tutor their mind as *gods*, and not *Daws*, to hold us ?

We are fluttering things, and our shoulders bear wings.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

What folly to talk about shoulders !

Look at Hermes ! He flies, and has wings likewise : and a number of other gods, stupid !

As Victory bold, with her pinions of gold, and at least you have oft heard of Cupid.

Then the fluttering Dove, coming down from above, old  
Homer matches with Iris.

## HOOPPOO.

And I shouldn't wonder if Zeus sent thunder, and taught  
us what *wingèd* fire is !

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

But if men should refuse to allow us our dues, and so,  
through ignorance, crimp us,  
And unjustly bestow the worship they owe to us on these  
gods of Olympus,  
We must send down crowds of Sparrows, like clouds,  
when the *seedsowing-time o the year is*,  
To peck up their grain, till they famish again, and then  
let them go to *Ceres* ;  
And let her, if she can, devise some plan to succour each  
famishing nation,  
And measure out corn from her copious horn to relieve  
a world's starvation.

## EUELPIDES.

With thanks she'll decline, I strongly opine, and present  
them with specious excuses.

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

Then shall *Ravens* do battle by *blinding their cattle* for  
agricultural uses ;  
And *peck the eyes out* of the *sheep* round about each home-  
stead, as fast as they stock it ;  
And *Apollô* may cure all the wounds they endure, since  
he puts all *the fées in his pocket*.

EUELPIDES.

But not till I get a good price for that pet pair of oxen  
I've so much relied on.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But if they acknowledge in you the whole college of  
gods, Kronos, Earth, and Poseidon,  
Rich blessings shall fall on the heads of them all.

HOOPOO.

Just mention, I pray you, one blessing.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

No *locust* brood shall eat the *young wood* and the shoots  
of the vines they are dressing :  
One detachment of fowls, either Falcons or Owls, will be  
strong enough to defeat them ;  
And their *figs* shall not fall, through *wood-louse* or *gall* ;  
*one covey of Thrushes shall eat them.*

HOOPOO.

But now teach us whence to confer opulence ; 'tis for  
gold they are grievously pining.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Birds of *divination* shall give information what diggings  
will pay them for mining :  
And to which distant port it were best to resort with  
money-making intention.  
Then no skipper will be any more lost at sea.

HOOPOO.

By what novel mode of prevention ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Some soothsaying Bird will just whisper a word to the  
sailors, either remarking,  
“ Don't sail, for I spy a hurricane nigh,” or, “ Now's the  
right time for embarking.”

EUELPIDES.

Then I'll purchase a ship, and set out on a trip; with you I'll not linger at leisure.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

They will likewise unfold chests hidden of old, for they know all deposited treasure.

Whence the proverb oft heard, "Not a soul *but a Bird* my safe-hidden hoard could discover."

EUELPIDES.

I'll sell my canoe, and purchase a hoe, and be turning these treasure-pots over!

HOOPOO.

So much then for wealth: but will *you* give them *health*, when the gods can alone bestow it?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

If good-luck run strong, *can* health be far wrong? I tell you, although you must know it,

That the man who is "down in his luck," and "*done brown*," must admit *his unwholesome complexion*.

HOOPOO.

But how will they reach good old age, since to each life is under Olympian direction?

Must they wither and die in their infancy?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

By Zeus, no! the birds through addition Their years will increase to *three hundred apiece!*

HOOPOO.

Indeed! and by whose permission?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

"By whose," do you ask? 'Tis the Birds' proper task. Oh, where is your observation,

If you really don't know that the *carriion Crow survives to the fifth generation?*

EUELPIDES.

Three hisses for Zeus! let him go to the deuce! and three cheers for the Birds' coronation.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Oh, yes! for birds, poor mortals  
 No marble fanes must build,  
 And their majestic portals  
 With precious metals gild.  
 The birds will dwell contented  
 In any hedge or tree,  
 And a simple *branch of olive*  
 Will be shrine for a grandee!  
 If we ever wish to offer  
 A sacrifice or so,  
 To Ammon or to Delphi  
 We shan't be forced to go;  
 But beneath the oleasters,  
 Or the arbutus to stand,  
 In the presence of our masters,  
 And upreaching either hand;  
 For a little *wheat and barley*,  
 And a few brief words of prayer,  
 They will grant us in their blessings  
 A considerable share!

CHORUS.

O dearest to me of all elders that be! O loved one,  
 whom lately I hated!  
 No powers shall make me ever forsake the excellent  
 plan thou hast stated.

But in thy speech exulting,  
 I have threatened with an oath,  
 If to me in faith and honour  
 Thou wilt frankly plight thy troth,  
 And proceed against the gods with  
 Consentaneous design,  
 They shall quickly cease to meddle  
 With the sceptre that is mine.

What depends upon force, we Birds of course will make  
 ourselves ready to bide it,  
 But if need should arise of wit to advise, and subtle'y,  
 you must provide it.

HOOPOO.

And now I swear by Zeus, this is no day  
 For us to shilly-shally and delay.  
 Prompt action is the word ! But first, sirs, rest  
 Awhile within my thatched and reedy nest,  
 And tell your names.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

With pleasure, sir ; my name  
 Is Peisthetærus.

HOOPOO.

His ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

As known to fame,  
 Euelpides of Chrius.

HOOPOO.

Welcome both !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

And we accept your kindness nothing loth.



HOOPOO.

Walk in, I beg.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Come on. [To EUELPIDES.

Pray go before, [To HOOPOO.

And guide our entrance through the narrow door.

HOOPOO.

Enter!

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But, What's-your-name, *put back* and *tell*

How we are able, he and I, to dwell

*Wingless* with *wingèd* creatures.

HOOPOO. [Turning back.

Amplly able!

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But let me draw your notice to a fable

Of Æsop, how a fox once came to grief

Through his alliance with your Eagle chief.

HOOPOO.

Fear not: there is a certain little root;

You shall both eat it, and your wings will shoot.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

If that may be, lead on. [Come, Manodorus

And Xanthias, carry the beds before us.<sup>1</sup>]

CHORUS.

Sir, I call you, I call!

HOOPOO.

But wherefore thus bawl?

<sup>1</sup> These words seem to be addressed to the stage attendants, and have little force.

CHORUS.

Take and breakfast these men at your leisure,  
Only bring out and leave the *Sweet Songstress of Eve*,  
the Muses' delight, for our pleasure.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yes, I entreat you, listen to their prayer,  
And lead the dear Bird from the rushes there.

EUELPIDES.

Oh, lead her forth! For pity's sake, don't fail,  
That we may both behold the Nightingale.

[Enter PROCNE.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [With rapture.

Heav'ns! what a lovely Bird! How soft and fair!  
With heavy gold chain such as virgins wear!

EUELPIDES.

Methinks I'll steal a kiss; yes, that I will!

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Stop, wretched dolt, beware her *pointed bill!*

EUELPIDES.

All right! for like a boiled egg when you peel it,  
I'll put her mask<sup>1</sup> aside before I steal it.

HOOPOO.

Now let us go.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Lead on, we follow thee.

'Tis needful for good luck. So let it be!

[*Exeunt* HOOPOO, PEISTHETÆRUS, EUELPIDES.

<sup>1</sup> The Nightingale was represented by a graceful actress in a bird-mask.

## PART V.

## CHORUS.

O sweet brown bird, I love thee best,  
 Dear fellow-songstress hail !  
 Thou art come, thou art come, and my  
 eyes are blest

To behold thee, Nightingale :  
 Oh, wed thy gurgling voice with mine  
 And we will sing our hymns divine.

Ah, tune for me that silvery quill  
 To its melodious ring,  
 And warble free and loud and shrill  
 The minstrelsy of spring.  
 Begin, begin the rapturous feast  
 Of thy stately musical anapæst.

[CHORUS, *with Nightingale accompaniment.*

Come, O mankind, by nature blind, like leaves in your  
 generation,  
 O do-little clan of clay-kneaded man ! O fleeting and  
 shadowy nation !  
 Callow brood of a day, yet in misery grey, like a dream  
 that dissolves in the morning,  
 Unbar your soul-portals, hear us the immortals, whose  
 day knows nor setting nor dawning ;  
 Us the tenants of air, never old up there, like the death-  
 less designs that we ponder.  
 That receiving thus true accounts from us of the glowing  
 firmament yonder,  
 Of the Birds' procreation, the gods' generation, whence  
 Chaos' and Erebus' source is,

You may Prodicus<sup>†</sup> slang, and bid him go hang with his  
cosmogonical forces.  
First Chaos we mark, Night, Erebus dark, and Tartarus  
broadly flowing,  
But no Earth was there, neither belt of air, nor heaven  
its bright stars showing.  
Then Night did rest on the fathomless breast of Erebus,  
and, conceiving,  
The black-winged dame a mother became, a wind-egg  
behind her leaving ;  
And the hours rolled on till she hatched a son, the dar-  
ling of all beholders,  
'Twas Eros bold, and his pinions of gold, like whirlpools,  
flashed on his shoulders.  
Then, on Tartarus wide, he won for his bride Chaos with  
the ebon tresses,  
And they with despatch proceeded to hatch the produce  
of their caresses ;  
Thus an exit winning we had our beginning, and he to  
the light did upbear us.  
But the gods, I wist, did never exist till all things were  
mingled by Eros ;  
From which collusion—heterogeneous fusion—proceeded  
both Ocean and Heaven,  
And Earth ; and the happy gods had birth and immor-  
tality given.  
In this way we are the most ancient by far of the gods of  
every description.  
But that Eros bright is our sire by right many arguments  
prove to conviction ;  
Like him we have wings and those fluttering things, the  
Loves, are for ever around us ;

<sup>†</sup> A philosophical ancestor of Mr. Darwin.

Rejected swains, when the season wanes, of the greatest  
assistance have found us,  
And, when hope was past, have succeeded at last in over-  
coming aversion  
By the gift of a Quail, Porphyry, Goose, or the tail of a  
Cock of the genus Persian.  
Each principal blessing that men are possessing, we Birds  
have undoubtedly brought 'em :  
In the first place we show how the seasons go, the spring,  
the winter, the autumn.  
'Tis seed-time again when the screaming Crane departs  
on her Libyan excursion ;  
Then the pilot may look at his helm on a hook, and  
slumber without exertion ;  
And Orestes should note the right time for his coat to  
be woven by honest labour ;  
Nor have recourse to physical force, and strip off the  
coat of his neighbour.  
When the Kite on the wing gives the signal of spring,  
'tis time for wool-combing and shearing ;  
But as soon as the Swallow skims over the hollow, you  
must sell the greatcoat you are wearing,  
And array yourself in something airy and thin, and all  
because of the Swallow.  
Next, we are, without gammon, your Delphi and Ammon,  
Dodona, and Phœbus Apollo :  
For you learn the Birds' mind, and then turn to each  
kind of pursuit without fear of miscarriage,  
Your cash to invest, or to feather your nest, or to settle  
a suitable marriage :  
And your omens all by one title you call, a word with a  
Bird derivation :  
'Tis ever the same, you "Augury" name the voice of divine  
revelation.

Augury is the token, whether sneezed, seen, or spoken ;  
 convulsion and vision and saying ;  
 And the servant you meet as you walk down the street,  
 and the donkey portentously braying,  
 Are Augury still ! so object as you will, no other con-  
 clusion can follow,  
 Than the truth of my words that you look to the Birds  
 when you want a soothsaying Apollo.

Then do but give the worship  
 That you impiously refuse,  
 And 'tis yours to seek the counsel  
 Of each fortune-telling muse ;  
 And enjoy in moderation  
 All the seasons, as they fleet,  
 Summer, winter, pleasant breezes,  
 And the sun's attempered heat.  
 Nor will we, your gods, avoid you  
 In an isolation proud,  
 Like Zeus, for instance, perching  
 Under folds of envious cloud ;  
 But be near at hand, and ready  
 Choicest blessings to renew  
 To yourselves, your little children,  
 And your children's children too—  
 Health and wealth and happy living,  
 Peace, youth, laughter, sweetness, light,  
 Dainty banquets, merry dances,  
 And the *cream of Birds' delight*.  
 Till at length your numerous blessings  
 And your riches will be such,  
 As almost to *overload* you,  
 And delight you *overmuch* !

## STROPHE.

O woodland muse, pîed Nightingale,  
 Tio-tio-tio-tio-tio-tiotinks !  
 I perch enamoured at thy side,  
 Tio-tio-tio-tiotinks !  
 On mountain top, or wooded vale,  
 Amid the ash's leafy pride,  
 Tio-tio-tio-tiotinks !  
 And pipe with thee from tawny breast  
 The sacred strains that Pan loves best,  
 Or stately tread in shady cover  
 Slow measures to the mountain mother :  
 Toto-toto-toto-toto-totinks !  
 Whence Phrynicus<sup>1</sup> the honey-sweet  
 Was wont with tuneful lips to eat  
 The fruit of that ambrosial strain,  
 And breathe it in each soft refrain.  
 Tio-tio-tio-tiotinks !

[*Addressing the audience.*

Is there one of you, spectators, who would twine the life  
 before him  
 With our gay and jovial bird-life ? let him come ; we're  
 ready for him.  
 And he'll find that sundry doings, here as crimes by law  
 withstood,  
 Are by us, the Birds, accounted meritorious and good.  
 If, for instance, here 'tis shameful lawlessness one's sire to  
 beat,  
 There with us 'tis reckoned honest, if your father you  
 should meet,

<sup>1</sup> An ancient tragic poet, often praised by Aristophanes.

Having run at him and pecked him, to accost him thus,  
 "Good sir,  
 If you feel inclined for fighting, I'm your chicken, raise  
 your spur."  
 Should a runaway among you have been branded with a  
 stripe,  
 He with us would gain the title of the "variegated  
 Snipe."  
 "Every *Turk* would be a *turkey*;" even Exekestides,  
 Though he be but slave and Carian, might adopt  
 ancestral *trees*,  
 And, begetting his own grandsire, join a club and live at  
 ease.  
 If the son of Peisias wishes to betray <sup>1</sup> the doors to those  
 Whom, as excommunicated, citizens esteem their foes,  
 Let him turn into a Partridge, since we deem it not unjust  
 For the chick of such an old bird to de-*part* and leave  
 his trust.

## ANTISTROPHE.

Such strains as these the wild swans sing,  
 Tio-tio-tio-tio-tio-tio-tiotinks !  
 Upon the banks of Hebrus' river,  
 Tio-tio-tio-tiotinks !  
 With mingled voice and flapping wing,  
 Who praise Apollo, bounteous Giver !  
 Tio-tio-tio-tiotinks !  
 Their pæan cleaves yon æry cloud,  
 The listening ocean-wave is bowed  
 In breezeless calm ! The beasts of prey  
 All panic-stricken steal away !  
 Toto-toto-toto-toto-tinks !

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, to admit them into the theatre. Peisias was probably a door keeper who abused his trust.



Olympus' distant summit rings !  
 A speechless wonder holds its kings !  
 But Grace and Muse take up the strain  
 And waft the music back again !

Tio-tio-tio-tiotinks !

[*To the audience.*

Nothing in the world is better, or a sweeter pleasure  
 brings,  
 Than to set to work in earnest and produce a pair of  
 wings.  
 Now, for instance, just suppose that one of you who sit  
 before us,  
 Having wings, was bored when hungry by some tire-  
 some *tragic* chorus,  
 He could fly straight home to luncheon, and return a  
 happier man,  
 Satisfied in mind and body when *our comedy* began.  
 Or, suppose one loved a maiden, and his happy lot befalls  
 To behold his rival boxed up in the magisterial stalls ;  
 On the wings of love he hastens to the maiden's secret  
 bower,  
 Steals a march upon the other, and flies back within the  
 hour.  
 Is not wing-producing, therefore, worth the pains one  
 thus employs ?  
 Why, Diitrephes, who only fashioned wings for willow-  
 toys,  
 Colonel first and then commander, reached the top of  
 his profession,  
 And the upstart still bestrides a yellow cock-horse in  
 procession.

[*Re-enter* HOOPPOO, *with* PEISTHETÆRUS *and*  
 EUELPIDES *winged.*

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*Laughing.*

Well, this will do ! Never, by heav'n, I swear,  
Saw I a more ridiculous affair.

EUELPIDES.

What makes you laugh ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Those lengthy quills of thine,  
You're like a Gander daubed upon a sign !

EUELPIDES.

And you with yon bald pate, I do declare,  
Are like a Blackbird with his crown plucked bare.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Bird-likenesses we have adopted thus  
By the authority of Æschylus,  
And, as he sings, "these feathers were not grown  
On other shoulders, they are all our own."

HOOPOO.

Come now, what business does our care demand ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

First, we must call our city by some grand  
And noble name ; then to the gods new-made  
I vote we sacrifice.

EUELPIDES.

Well said !

HOOPOO.

Come, take we then into consideration  
The subject of our city's appellation.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

How say you ? Shall we take this title great  
From Lacedæmon's city, and create  
Another Sparta ?

EUELPIDES.

No, by Hercules !  
No Spartan nomenclature, if you please !  
This Sparta means *a rope*; now could I find  
No other, such a rope should never bind  
My broken bedstead.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But how name the place ?

EUELPIDES.

Hence from the clouds of heaven, and empty space  
'Twi't sky and earth, a name will we compound  
To make one gape !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

What say you to the sound,  
Cloud-Cuckoo city ?

HOOPOO.

Hurrah ! Hurrah ! I say ;  
'Tis a fair name ; a great name every way.

EUELPIDES.

Cloud-Cuckoo ! Surely in that selfsame spot  
Theogones invests what wealth he's got ;  
And Æschines is also building there  
A whole array of "castles in the air !"

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Its story will in gasconade outdo  
The plain of Phlegra, where a braggart crew  
Of gods harpooned, from vantage ground defiant,  
The sons of earth, each heaven-scaling giant.

EUELPIDES.

Ah, 'tis a dainty scheme, this town affair !  
Which god or goddess shall be patron there ?  
To which shall we devote the broidered gown ?

## THE BIRDS.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Why not Athene guardian of the town ?

EUELPIDES.

How could a town, think you, well-managed be,  
Where stands a lady-god armed *cap-à-pie*,  
And Cleisthenes is weaving like a miss ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But who shall rule in our Acropolis ?

HOOPPOO.

One of ourselves ; that bird of Persian nation,  
Who everywhere has earned the reputation  
Of the Game Chicken.

EUELPIDES.

Bravo ! Signor Chicken.  
He'll perch on rocks as tightly as a lichen.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*Rapidly to* EUELPIDES.

Come now, bestir yourself and fly mid-air  
To help the workmen who are building there.  
Provide the gravel ; strip yourself and mix  
The mortar ; carry up the hod of bricks ;  
Slide down the ladder ; set each sentinel ;  
Enforce the curfew ; bear the watchman's bell  
In rapid circuit ; tarry there all night.  
Despatch two heralds with divergent flight,  
One upward to the gods, one down to men :  
All this being done, return to me again.

EUELPIDES.

[*Vexed.*

And you stay here and hang yourself, say I.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Nay, go, good fellow, where I send you ; fly !  
Else no work will be done ; no, not the least.

I for my part intend to call the Priest  
To arrange the ritual, that I may bring  
To the new gods their earliest offering.

[*Exit* EUELPIDES.

Now you, and you, boy, bring at my commands  
The basket and lustration for our hands.

CHORUS.

This plan, by which, in solemn state  
And gorgeous pageantry,  
You would the gods propitiate,  
Finds full consent in me.  
A lamb also to sacrifice  
Will be a graceful thing ;  
So let the Pythian shout arise  
And Chairis bravely sing,

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*CHAIRIS whistles: enter* PRIEST.

Pray stop that whistling! Heav'ns! what can it mean?  
Many and strange the sights that I have seen,  
But ne'er till now a Crow with mouthpiece on!  
Priest, to your task. Let sacrifice be done  
To the new gods.

PRIEST.

I will do so! But where  
Is he who holds the basket?

Offer prayer

To the bird Vesta, to the Hawk-guardian of the hearth,  
and to their lordships and ladyships the Birds all and  
every, both the Cocks and the Hens——

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*Responding.*

O Sunian Hawk! All hail, Pelargic King!

PRIEST.

Also to the Pythian and Delian Swan, and to Latona of the Island of Quails, and to Artemis the Goldfinch Goddess——

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Goldfinch her name, Colcœnis now no more !

PRIEST.

Also to Bacchus the Finch, and to the Ostrich, the mother of gods and men——

PEISTHETÆRUS.

O Mistress Cybele, Ostrich ; among us  
Known as the mother of Theocritus !

PRIEST.

That they will grant to the Cloud-Cuckoo towns-folk health and safety for themselves and for the Chians<sup>1</sup>——

PEISTHETÆRUS.

I must confess I feel inclined to grin  
Hearing those Chians everywhere dragged in.

PRIEST.

To the heroes, and to the sons of the heroes ; to the Porphyry, and to the Pelican, and to the Spoon-bill, and to the Bull-finch, and to the Grouse, and to the Peacock, and to the Owl, and to the Duck, and to the Bittern, and to the Heron, and to the Osprey and to the Black-cap, and to the Goat-sucker.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Confound you ! Stop that everlasting whine,  
Ospreys and Vultures summoned here to dine !  
Why, don't you see, one solitary Kite  
Would seize this meat and bear it out of sight ?

<sup>1</sup> Ridiculing the custom of praying for the Chians as the allies of the Athenians in the "State prayers." (See "Scholiast.")

Be off, you and your garlands every one ;  
I will perform the sacrifice alone.

[*Drives the PRIEST away.*]

CHORUS.

Then I a second hymn must sing  
In solemn festal tone,  
And summon to the offering  
One blessèd god alone.  
And even then 'tis to be feared  
The food will not suffice,  
For nothing, save some horns and beard,  
Are here for sacrifice.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*Commencing the rites.*]

Let us beseech the wingèd deities  
Whom with our sacrifice we hope to please.

[*Enter POET, shabbily dressed.*]

POET.

Cloud-Cuckoo, the prosperous city,  
Celebrate, my Muse  
With thy tuneful ditty.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

What is this object? [*Aside.*]

Tell me who thou art. [*To POET.*]

POET.

Mine the voice that still diffuses  
Words like honey sweet,  
“ Active servant of the Muses——”  
See Homer !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

A slave ! Then why this long hair flowing aft ?

## THE BIRDS.

POET.

No slave. We pupils of the gentle craft  
 All "active servants" of the Muses are——  
 See Homer!

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Your coat, good sooth, agrees with what you say;  
 And has done "active service" in its day.  
 But tell me, luckless scribbler, why you came.

POET.

I have composed full many a dithyramb,  
 Exceeding lovely, also verses fine  
 For maidens' voices, and some odes divine  
 After the pattern of Simonides;  
 On your Cloud-Cuckoo city I wrote these.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

How along ago wrote you these poems witty?

POET.

[*Gushingly.*]

Long since—long since I eulogised this city!

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Why, 'tis its dedication! When you came  
 Our baby-town had just received its name.

POET.

[*Quite unruffled.*]

But the word of the Muses came with speed,  
 Like the trampling rush of a galloping steed!

"O thou whose name [Quotes PINDAR.  
 Breathes of the altar-flame!  
 Builder of Aitna, Father, ere I go,  
 Whatsoe'er the free soul bringeth,  
 As a dole to one who singeth,  
 Do thou on me bestow!"



PEISTHETÆRUS.

This fellow will give trouble. It were best  
To give him something, and dismiss the pest.

[*To one of the attendants.*

You wear a leathern jerkin, and below it  
A tunic. Strip, and give this to the Poet.

[*To the POET.*

There! take the jerkin and your limbs enfold,  
You seem to shake all over with the cold.

POET.

My mistress Muse unloathing  
Accepts your gift of clothing.

Now ere we part

This other verse of Pindar learn by heart.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*Aside.*

Alas! the fellow will not make a start.

POET.

“ All among the nomad Scythians  
Straton wanders, nipt with cold ;  
Ah, he wears no closely-woven  
Tunic with its ample fold.”

Small the glory of a jerkin  
Which no tunic underlies.

A word to the wise !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

You want the tunic, too ; of course, I know it.

[*To the Attendant.*

So strip it off! We must oblige a poet.

Here, take it and depart !

[*Giving it.*

POET.

The Poet goes !

I'll to the city straight ; and thus compose :

“ O golden-throned Apollo, crown  
 With fame this shivery-shaky town ;  
 Through snowy plains spread out afar,  
 Sing, oh, be joyful, here we are !” [*Exit* POET.]

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Nay, now by Heaven, our nice warm tunic taking,  
 I thought you had avoided all this shaking.  
 Whoever would have dreamt this poet-loon  
 Could hear a rumour of our town so soon !

[*Returning to the Sacrifice.*

But now once more bear round the lustral water.

Be silent ! [*Enter* DIVINER.]

DIVINER. [*With authority.*

Sprinkle not the goat for slaughter.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But who are you ?

DIVINER.

If you desire to know,

I'm a Diviner.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Go to Jericho !

DIVINER.

O my good sir, believe me it is best  
 Not to turn sacred subjects into jest,  
 For I declare an oracle of Bacis  
 Affects Cloud-Cuckoo, and no other places.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Then why did you not bring these revelations  
 Ere I commenced my building operations ?

DIVINER.

Religious reasons such a course forbade.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Well, let us hear the words that Bacis said.

DIVINER. [*Pompously reading.*

“But when wolves and old grey crows, in joint habitation,  
Dwell in the mediate space that lies between Sicyon and Corinth.”

PEISTHETÆRUS.

How are Corinthians mixed with my affair?

DIVINER.

Thus Bacis darkly indicates the air : [*Reads.*  
“First, Pandora demandeth a sacrificed ram, with a white fleece ;  
As for the prophet who cometh and first reciteth my verses,  
Him thou must freely reward with a clean shirt and new pair of sandals.”

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Are sandals mentioned?

DIVINER.

Take the book and see. [*Reads.*  
“Give him a goblet of wine, and fill both his hands with the ram’s fry.”

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Is ram’s fry mentioned?

DIVINER.

Take the book and see. [*Reads.*  
“If, my good friend, thou perform all this as I have commanded,  
Eagle enthronèd in clouds thou shalt be; but if thou refusest,  
Not even Dove shalt thou be, or Woodpecker, much less an Eagle.”

## THE BIRDS.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Is all that mentioned ?

DIVINER.

Take the book and see.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

*[Producing a similar roll.*

Your oracle by no means then doth follow

The one I have here copied from Apollo.

*[Reads in imitation.*

“When an impostor appeareth unbidden, a vagabond  
fellow,  
Vexing the priests at the altar and coveting handful of  
ram’s fry,  
Beat him right well on the parts that lie between shoulder  
and shoulder.”

DIVINER.

I guess you’re chaffing !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Take the book and see. *[Reads.*

“Spare not, whoever he be, an Eagle enthroned in the  
heavens,  
Not if he be Lampon, or even the great Diopieithes.”

DIVINER.

Is all that mentioned ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Take the book and—*feel.*Be off, you gallows-bird ! *[Beats him with the roll.*

DIVINER.

Alas ! forbear.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Out, out ! I say, and prophesy elsewhere.

[*Exit* DIVINER. *Enter* SURVEYOR.

SURVEYOR.

I've just stept in——

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Behold another pest !

Now what do *you* want ? What is your request ?

What is your purpose ? What part do you play,

That you have cared to travel all this way ?

SURVEYOR.

To *land*-survey your air is my intent,

And draw a schedule of apportionment.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Good heavens ! Of all strange mortals, who are you ?

SURVEYOR.

My name is Meton ; known all Hellas through

And Mount Colonus.<sup>1</sup>

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Pray explain this treasure

You carry with you.

SURVEYOR.

This is my air-measure.

That the air is like an oven needs no proof :

So I begin to measure at the roof,

And fix this bending rod, from which aslant—

You understand me ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

No, indeed I can't.

<sup>1</sup> Which he may have used as an observatory.

SURVEYOR.

Then I shall use the straight rod here provided,  
So that your circle will be sub-divided  
And duly quartered : then your market-place  
Forming the centre, you correctly trace  
Your streets straight from it, like the rays that are  
Divergent from the circlet of a star.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Thales himself could not design so well.  
Meton !

SURVEYOR.

Say on.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Dost know I love thee well ?

Then take my friendly counsel, and do not  
Stay here, but sneak off fast as thou canst trot.

SURVEYOR.

But wherefore this advice ? I see no dangers.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Like Sparta, certain laws affecting strangers  
Are here in force, and it would be a pity,  
If kicks and cuffs assailed you in the city.

SURVEYOR.

Is there a revolution ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Not at all.

SURVEYOR.

How is it then ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Why thus, both great and small  
Have voted to belabour every quack.

SURVEYOR.

Then I'll forthwith retreat and save my back.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

I scarcely think you've time to get off clear ;  
For hark ! the angry crowd is drawing near.

[METON *is beaten by the Birds.*]

SURVEYOR.

Ah, me ! poor wretch.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

I told you to beware.  
Will you not measure yourself off elsewhere ?

[*Exit* METON. *Enter* INSPECTOR.]

INSPECTOR.

Where are the foreign Consuls ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Inform me what  
Mogul is this !

INSPECTOR.

I'm here, elect by lot  
Inspector to Cloud-Cuckoo.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Inspector ? Who  
On such an errand has commissioned you ?

INSPECTOR.

A foolish bill of Teleas.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

O those sages !  
Then I suppose you want to get your wages,  
And have no farther trouble, but depart.

INSPECTOR.

Yes, I should stay at home to play my part  
In making a political diversion.  
In fact, I am in treaty with the Persian.

## THE BIRDS.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*Beating him.*  
There! take the pay you merit, and be jogging;  
You'll get no other wages but a flogging!

INSPECTOR. [*Indignantly.*  
What was that for?

PEISTHETÆRUS,  
Only a slight assertion  
Of interest in your secret with the Persian.

INSPECTOR.  
I here bear witness that you violate  
In me the Inspector sent forth by the State.

PEISTHETÆRUS.  
Will you not disappear, and take with you  
This precious brace of ballot-boxes too?  
[*Exit* INSPECTOR.  
Is it not monstrous that they dare to send  
Inspectors ere our sacrifices end?

[*Enter* EDICT-MONGER.  
EDICT-MONGER. [*Reading pompously.*  
"But if a Cloud-Cuckoo-onian shall assault an  
Athenian——"

PEISTHETÆRUS.  
What rascal parchment's that?

EDICT-MONGER.  
I come because  
I sell decrees, and bring you these new laws.

PEISTHETÆRUS.  
To what effect?

EDICT-MONGER. [*Reading.*  
"That the same weights, measures, and statutes shall  
be in use at Cloud-Cuckoo-town as among the Olo-  
phyxians."



PEISTHETÆRUS.

I'll use for you no *Hollow-fist-ian weight*.[*Striking him.*]

EDICT-MONGER.

O my good sir, why are you so irate?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

If you don't carry all these laws away,  
You shall have law, and bitter law, to-day.[*Exit* EDICT-MONGER. *Re-enter* INSPECTOR  
*on the other side.*]

INSPECTOR.

I hereby summon Peisthetærus to appear in the month  
of April next to answer to a charge of assault.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Indeed, fair sir, so you are there again.

[*Exit* INSPECTOR. *Enter* EDICT-MONGER  
*on the other side.*]

EDICT-MONGER.

And whosoever shall drive away the magistrates and  
refuse to receive them according to the statute——”

PEISTHETÆRUS. [Frantically.]

Ah, woe is me! So you are there again.

[*Exit* EDICT-MONGER. *Re-enter* INSPECTOR.]

INSPECTOR.

I'll ruin you, and damages will lay  
At thousands! Every farthing you shall pay.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

At least I'll use my good-luck ere it turns,  
And smash to atoms thy two ballot-urns.[*Kicks and breaks them.*]

## THE BIRDS.

INSPECTOR.

Who spoilt the tablet of decrees last night?

[*Exit.*

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Bah ! seize him, some one ! Rascal, cease your flight.

[*To Attendants.*

Let us depart ere other brawls begin,

And to the gods do sacrifice within.

[*Exeunt PEISTHETÆRUS, Attendants, and Goat.*

## PART VI.

CHORUS OF BIRDS.

Now to me the All-surveying,

All-controlling, everywhere

Mortal men shall come conveying

Sacrifice, and votive prayer.

For I overlook all places,

And preserve the ripening fruits,

Massacreing divers races

Of destructive insect-brutes :

Gluttons that lurk in branches, and devour

The early fruit fresh from its native flower.

And I prosecute with rancour

In the scented gardens these

Who corrode with blight and canker

All the promise of the trees.

Eaters and creepers die of every class

Wherever my o'ershadowing pinions pass.

Now whereas a proclamation has been duly made this day,  
"Whatsoever man among you Melian Diagoras shall slay

Will receive therefore a talent, and the like is promised  
 To the man who kills a tyrant, be he living, *be he dead* ;  
 We therefore proclaim as follows here to-day : “ It is our  
 will,

Whosoever shall among you Philocrates the Poulterer kill,  
 Shall receive a talent ; and an extra sum of talents four,  
 If he bring the said delinquent bound and living to our  
 door.”

For he strings together Finches, selling them at seven a  
 penny ;

Blows aside the Thrushes' feathers, treating them with  
 ignominy ;

Outrages imprisoned Blackbirds, sticking feathers in their  
 nose ;

Likewise keeps entrappèd Pigeons cooped up in his cages  
 close,

And obliges them to kidnap their companions, as decoys :  
 So we make this proclamation, and we warn all girls and  
 boys :

“ If within your aviaries any sort of bird there be  
 Kept in durance vile, instanter go and set that prisoner  
 free ;

Else, if you refuse compliance, we will pay you tit for tat,  
 Catch and cage you as decoys to capture others—think  
 of that.”

Happy Birds ! We need no dresses

When the wintry winds are keen ;

Us no solar heat oppresses

In the torrid summer sheen :

For we lurk among the flowers

Which the sloping meadow weaves ;

And inhabit woodland bowers

Sheltered by the fanning leaves ;

While the cicadas chirrup, leap, and run,  
Madly enamoured of the noontide sun.  
    In the winter dreamless slumbers  
        We enjoy in cavern lair,  
    Or converse in wanton numbers  
        With the mountain Oreads there ;  
Then in the spring peck berries from the myrtle,  
To Graces dear, snow-white as virgin's kirtle.  
Now we wish one word to whisper in the judges' ears like-  
wise,  
Telling them what boons await them all, if they give *us*  
the prize ;  
Richer gifts than Alexander took from Venus, as his due  
For his judgment on Mount Ida, we will give to all of you.  
First, since every judge among you is for money hanker-  
ing sore,  
Owl-stampt coins of Laurian silver shall forsake you never-  
more :  
But within your purses dwelling silver owls their nests  
shall build,  
Lay, sit, hatch, and the interior with their shining owlets  
gild.  
In addition to these presents you shall henceforth live in  
clover,  
Since with comforts snug as birds-nests to the roof we'll  
ridge you over.  
Should you fill a minor office, and devise some little  
jobbery,  
In your hand we'll place a clever Falcon to perform the  
robbery.  
If you give a little dinner bird-crops shall provide the  
fare.  
But if you decide against us, we forewarn you all to wear,

Statue like, broad brazen helmets, lest your linen (mark  
my words),

When we see it clean, be spotted by innumerable birds.

[*Enter* PEISTHETÆRUS.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

The sacrifice, O Birds, has been propitious ;  
But still it seems to me somewhat suspicious,  
That we have seen no messenger at all  
To tell us how things prosper at the wall.  
Stay ! Hither runs one with a racing puff.

[*Enter* MESSENGER, *breathless*.

MESSENGER.

Where—where—where is he ? where ? Be good enough  
To guide me to our leader Peisthetærus..

PEISTHETÆRUS.

I am he ! Well, what message do you bear us ?

MESSENGER.

Your city wall is finished !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Excellent !

MESSENGER.

A work most splendid, most magnificent,  
So broad that two of Athens' bragging " chaps "''  
Might pass each other on the top in traps,  
Each with his pair of horses at full speed,  
Prodigious creatures, like the Trojan steed.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Hercules !

MESSENGER.

Its length extends, and this I say  
Who measured it with my own hands to-day,  
A hundred fathoms !

## THE BIRDS.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Poseidon ! what a length !  
Who built a wall of such exceeding strength ?

MESSENGER.

The Birds, and no soul else ! I here declare  
No mason, joiner, bricklayer, was there  
From Egypt,<sup>1</sup> but they built it workman-wise  
With their own *claws*, to my intense surprise.  
First thirty thousand Cranes from Libya stop  
With a foundation-stone in every crop :  
Which Corncrakes mason with their beaks so quick ;  
Meanwhile ten thousand Storks are making brick ;  
While Coots and all the tribe from river lair  
Fetched water from below into the air.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Who brought the mortar ?

MESSENGER.

Hérons in hods supplied it.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

How into hods did they contrive to slide it ?

MESSENGER.

O my good sir, in all my life I never  
Have witnessed a contrivance half so clever.  
The Geese struck down their legs into the clay  
Like trowels, and their broad feet in that way  
Filled up the hods.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

O most surprising *feat* !

MESSENGER.

The Ducks, moreover, aproned as 'tis meet,

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps read "Ireland."

Were carrying bricks up all the time by stacks.  
 The Swallows also bearing on their backs  
 Their trowels baby-wise, and flying oft,  
 Conveyed the mortar in their beaks aloft.

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

Well, after this let him be plagued who likes  
 With hired workmen and their frequent "strikes."  
 Yet tell me now, what birds among them could  
 Work off that portion which is made of wood?

## MESSENGER.

The joiners (and they joinered with a will)  
 Were clever Woodpeckers ; by dint of *bill*  
 They cut out all the gates ; their frequent knocks  
 Resounded like the hammering in the docks.  
 And now the gates are hung all safe and sound,  
 Their bars secure ; the sentries walk their round ;  
 The watch is kept ; the bell is borne about ;  
 The guards are stationed ; and a sharp look-out  
 Kept from the beacon-towers. But I retire  
 To take the bath my heated limbs require.  
 As for the rest, what course we must pursue,  
 The ordering thereof remains with you.

[*Exit* MESSENGER.

## CHORUS.

[*To* PEISTHETÆRUS, *who looks surprised.*

How now? What ails you? Do you feel amazed  
 Because the wall has been so quickly raised?

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

By Heaven, I do ! I well may feel surprise ;  
 It sounds so *truly* like a pack of *lies*.  
 But see, a guardsman, with a martial air,  
 Posts hither to announce the doings there.

## THE BIRDS.

SECOND MESSENGER.

[*Entering.*

O dear ! O dear ! O dear me !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

What means this ?

SECOND MESSENGER.

Events have happened dreadfully amiss.  
 One of the gods who favour Zeus' cause,  
 Baffled the vigilance of our Jackdaws,  
 The sentinels by day, and, passing through  
 Our gates, soared into the ethereal blue.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

O dreadful act and execrably done !  
 Which of the gods ?

SECOND MESSENGER.

I can't say : but 'twas known  
 To carry wings.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Then ought you to have thrown  
 Out mounted guards forthwith in hot pursuit.

SECOND MESSENGER.

Yea, thirty thousand Hawks did we depute,  
 Horse-archers all, this 'exigence to meet.  
 Nor only so, for every bird whose feet  
 Is armed with crooked talons, Kite and Crow,  
 Falcon and Vulture, Jay and Eagle go.  
 And still they chase the god : the welkin rings  
 With the wild rush and whirring of their wings.  
 It bears in this direction—it is near—  
 Yea, close at hand.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Bring forth then—do you hear ?—  
 Your slings and bows ! Some shoot, and others fling !  
 Collect the servants. Some one bring my sling.



## CHORUS.

War arises, unspeakable war !  
 The Birds and the gods are wrath.  
 Keep ward in the cloud-girt air afar,  
 Which Erebus brought forth,  
 That never a god, by night or by day,  
 May stealthily enter and pass this way.

Gather ye, gather ye, merry Birds all ;  
 Your vigilant circle keep ;  
 Be ready whatever chance befall !  
 For listen ! The sounding sweep  
 Of wings, like a whirlwind through the sky,  
 Betokens that this same god is nigh.

[*Enter IRIS, with wings extended, chased by the Birds.*]

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

Ho ! whither, whither art thou flying, pray ?  
 Be still ! Move not ! Where thou art standing, stay !  
 Desist from flight ! Who art thou ? From what part ?  
 'Twere best to say distinctly whence thou art.

## IRIS.

From the great Gods Olympian I hail.

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

What is thy name ? Miss Helmet or Miss Sail ?<sup>1</sup>

## IRIS.

Swift Iris.

## PEISTHETÆRUS.

Which state-galley name you thus,  
 The Salaminia or the Paralus ?

## IRIS.

What means all this ?

<sup>1</sup> Referring to her head-gear and her wings.

## THE BIRDS.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*To the Guard.*

One of you Kites be ready,  
To fly up and arrest this pretty lady.

IRIS.

Arrest me! Why, what scoundrel makes this fuss?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

I'll show you to your cost.

IRIS.

Ridiculous!

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Confess, accursed creature, through which gate  
Our city thou hast dared to penetrate?

IRIS.

What do I know or care about your gates?

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*To CHORUS.*

You hear how slyly she prevaricates.

Say, didst thou go and ask to see the chief  
Of the Jackdaws, or enter like a thief?

No answer. Art thou furnished with a pass  
Sealed duly by the Storks?

IRIS. [*Aside.*

Who is this ass?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Hast thou received none?

IRIS.

Are you really sane?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Nor cared from a bird-general to obtain  
The countersign?

IRIS.

Oh no! Not I, by Zeus!  
Nobody gave me anything, you goose.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

So through our alien city, and through chaos,  
Thou fly'st by stealth. A pretty trick to play us !

IRIS.

Which other way then must we gods now fly ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

By Zeus ! I neither know nor care, not I,  
So that they pass not here. But even now  
Thou gettest not thy due ; for know, if thou  
Hadst thy desert and justice had its way,  
Thou wouldst be put to death this very day,  
If thou wert twenty Irises in one !

IRIS.

Pshaw ! I'm immortal !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yet it would be done !

For we shall undergo, in my opinion,  
Intolerable wrong, if our dominion  
Extend o'er others with unquestioned sway,  
And yet you gods presume to disobey  
Our edicts, and for your part will not know  
The weaker to the wall perforce must go.  
But tell me whither you set sail to-day.

IRIS.

Me ? From my sire I fly to men to say  
That he requires more cattle to be slain  
In honour of the Gods Olympian  
On sacrificial altars, and the roads  
Perfumed with savoury steam.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Gods ! but what gods ?

## THE BIRDS.

IRIS.

What gods? Ourselves, who in the heavens abide.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

So you're the gods, then?

IRIS.

Are there gods beside?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yes; among men bird-gods are now in use,  
And they must offer not by Zeus, to Zeus,  
But to the Birds.

IRIS. [*Magnificently.*]

Fool, fool! hast thou no dread  
Of divine vengeance falling on thy head?  
Lest justice with the spade of Zeus efface  
In overwhelming ruin all thy race,  
And bolts from his Licymnian thunder-crashes  
Thee and thy house reduce to smoking ashes?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Now listen, please, to me, and stop this bluster;  
Such boggy threats are very well to fluster  
A Lydian or a Phrygian. I am Greek!  
Know, then, if Zeus shall any further seek  
To harass me, I'll send my Eagle bands  
To burn to ashes with their blazing brands  
Amphion's palace; and against your sire  
I'll send as high as heaven my birds of fire;  
My Porphyries, in skins of leopard clad,  
More than six hundred strong. Of old he had  
Sufficient work *one Porphyry* to subdue.  
So much for Zeus; and now I threaten you,  
His minion, if you dare to harass me,  
Since you are like a galley, I will be

Like Neptune, with his trident strong and true,  
To pierce my Lady Iris through and through.

IRIS.

Go hang, you rascal, with your gibberish !

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*As if scaring a bird.*  
Be off, and vanish quickly, won't you? Whish !

IRIS.

[*Departing.*

My sire shall stop your insolence, I swear.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*Ironically.*

I am so frightened ! Won't you fly elsewhere?  
Your fire and brimstone might some baby scare.

CHORUS.

We thus exclude the heavenly powers  
From passing through this town of ours,  
And never will permit  
The fume of sacrifice to go  
Up through our floor from men below  
For Gods to relish it.

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PART VII.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Strange if the herald we sent down to men  
Should never more return to us again.

*Enter* HERALD.

HERALD.

Oh, Peisthetærus, blessèd and most wise,  
Most famous, wisest, subtlest to advise !  
Thrice blessed, oh, command me what to do !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

What do you mean ?

HERALD.

Here is a crown for you,  
A golden crown by all the people sent  
Your wisdom to reward and compliment.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Thank you. But why this honour of a crown ?

HERALD.

O architect of air's most famous town,  
Thou knowest not what glory has accrued  
To thee from men, or what a multitude  
Profess themselves enraptured with this place.  
Before you built this city all the race  
Went Sparta-mad, and vied in imitation  
Of the Laconian want of cultivation ;  
Wore long hair, fasted, washed not, played the tricks  
Of Socrates, took clubs for walking-sticks.  
But, bird-mad now, they change their note, and try  
To imitate the Birds in luxury.  
Like us they cut their morning dozes short,  
And fly to pick *up early worms* in court ;  
Then down among the *leaves* they all alight,  
And there they peck away at *bills* till night.  
This bird-craze now has grown to such a length  
That many are assuming on the strength  
*Fowl* names. A costermonger who is lame  
Is "Partridge ;" and Menippus took the name  
Of "Swallow ;" and Opuntius "One-eyed Raven ;"  
Philacles the "Lark ;" Theogones, that craven,  
"Fox-goose ;" Lycurgus would the "Ibis" play,  
Chœrephon the "Bat," Syracosius the "Jay ;"

The coward Meidias is surnamed the "Quail,"  
 For if you punch his head he soon "*turns tail.*"  
 I left them warbling, out of love for birds,  
 All sorts of songs in which occur such words  
 As "Swallow," "Duck," "Goose," "Turtle-dove," or  
 "wings,"  
 Or some slight reference to "flying things."  
 Thus the world wags. But I should give you warning  
 That more than thousands ten will come this morning  
 Petitioning for wings and taloned feet :  
 Whence will you get enough their wants to meet ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Good heavens ! we must stand no longer still.

[*To First Attendant.*]

Go you, as quickly as you can, and fill  
 The tubs and baskets of whatever kind  
 With wings of any sort that you may find.

[*To Second Attendant.*]

You, Manes, bring them out of doors to me,  
 While I receive this coming company,

CHORUS.

Some bard ere long  
 Will sing a song,  
 And call our population *man* ifold,

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yes, only let our lucky fortune hold.

CHORUS.

The love men bear our city waxes stronger.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [To MANES.]

Bring out the wings at once. Don't tarry longer.

## THE BIRDS.

CHORUS.

No wonder they hasten  
 To sojourn here,  
 For nothing is lacking  
 That man holds dear :—  
 Wit, wooing, with each  
 Ambrosial grace,  
 And peace of mind  
 With a smiling face.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*To MANES, within.*]  
 How shamefully you serve your master !  
 Can't you move a little faster ?

CHORUS.

Let some one bring the basket quick !  
 Perhaps 'twere best to pass  
 Within the door and use the stick :  
 He's slower than an ass.

*Enter MANES, with basket.*

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Ah, Manes always was a lout.

CHORUS.

Now take the wings and set them out,  
 Arranging them in order due,  
 Singing, talking, sea birds too ;  
 Then take the claimants man by man  
 And feather them as best you can.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*To MANES.*]

Now, by the Hawks, I won't refrain my hands  
 If thou so loiterest over my commands.



*Enter* PARRICIDE.

PARRICIDE.

A high-flying Eagle I fain would be,  
To cross the desolate waste of sea,  
Till my home I make  
By the rippling marge of some deep blue lake.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Our messenger told us no more than truth ;  
For, lo ! of *Eagles sings* this coming youth.

PARRICIDE.

Ah ! there is nothing sweeter than to fly.  
'The customs of the Birds for me, say I.  
I'm bird-mad, and, on wings of aspiration,  
My spirit soars to make its habitation  
Henceforth among you Birds. How I should love it !  
To live beneath bird-law is all I covet.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

What law ? for birds you know acknowledge many.

PARRICIDE.

Why, all ! But this in preference to any :  
Among the Birds 'tis counted good and wise  
To choke one's father, or peck out his eyes.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yes, sure enough, a plucky Bird he's holden  
Who, in his *chick-hood, clapper-claws* the old 'un.

PARRICIDE.

I therefore entertain a strong desire  
To migrate hither and to choke my sire,  
And so inherit all he has below.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

At the same time 'tis well that you should know

We own a law which anciently was writ  
 On the Storks' Tables, whence we copied it,  
 That when the parent Stork, with nursing care,  
 Has taught his baby Storks to take the air,  
 The young brood, if their father's eyes are dim,  
 Shall bring him food, and take like care of him.

PARRICIDE. [*Disgusted.*

Really! A grand advantage I should gather  
 By coming here, if I must keep my father.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

No, no, my worthy sir; for since you come  
 With honourable intent to seek a home,  
 To save you from a duty so absurd,  
 I'll feather you in black—an orphan bird.  
 But, my fair youth, let me suggest a rule  
 (Not without reason) which I learnt at school,—  
 "*Strike not thy father.*" Take this wing instead;  
 For th' other side this spur; upon your head  
 Conscious of bearing this cockscomb, away!  
 Enlist, keep guard, and live upon your pay.  
 But spare your father's life. If fight you will,  
 Fly off to Thrace straightway, and fight your fill.

PARRICIDE.

By Bacchus! I approve your arguments,  
 And will comply.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

So will you show good sense.

[*Exit PARRICIDE.*

*Enter CINESIAS, Dithyrambic Poet, lean and lame.*

CINESIAS.

I soar to Olympus on gossamer wing,  
 And hither and thither I fly as I sing.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*Aside.*]

This object needs a whole ship-load of wings.

CINESIAS.

With spirit undaunted, and body too,  
My course I pursue  
Through regions new.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Hail, linden-light Cinesias, what brings  
Thy halting foot to circle hitherward ?

CINESIAS.

The desire I have to become a bird :  
The Nightingale's my choice,  
With his loud shrill voice.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Cease singing, then, and plainly state your prayer.

CINESIAS.

Give me some wings that I may float mid-air,  
'Twixt heaven and earth, and from the clouds may cram  
Some new wind-whirled snow-beaten dithyramb.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

How say you ? Clouds the dithyramb impart ?

CINESIAS.

Ay, thence depends the grandeur of our art,<sup>1</sup>  
For all the splendid passages that grace  
The dithyramb derive from cloudy space,  
That indescribable—that volatile—  
Aërial, gloomy, lofty-whirling style :  
But list ! and what I mean you soon will know.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Not I.

<sup>1</sup> Another satire on the turgid rant of many tragic or dithyrambic choruses of the day.

CINESIAS.

By, Hercules, I'll make you, though—  
 For I will sing you a song of air,  
 And of all the shadows mirrored there,  
 Of the flying, æther-racing, long-necked bird——

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Absurd !

CINESIAS.

Let me go !  
 Passing with a leaping motion  
 O'er the race-course of the ocean  
 Swift as breezes blow !

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*Silly producing a whip.*]

By heaven ! I must lay these breezes low !

CINESIAS.

Sometimes madly southward steering,  
 Sometimes towards the north careering,  
 I am here, I am there,  
 Cutting a furrow thro' havenless air !  
 Brilliant and wise, [*To PEISTHETÆRUS.*]  
 Signor, the notable tricks you devise.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*Whipping him.*]

Don't you rejoice in whirling round before us ?

CINESIAS.

What ! strike a master of the cyclic-chorus ?  
 Fought for as I have been by many a tribe !<sup>1</sup>

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Perhaps then you are willing to abide  
 And teach a chorus of the Birds their *hops*  
 For Leotopides of the tribe Cecrops ?

<sup>1</sup> Each tribe had in turn to provide a choragia ; the expense was undertaken by some rich member, who appointed the chorodidaskilos.

CINESIAS.

You only gibe at me, that's very plain.  
 Yet, let me tell you, here I will remain  
 Till I obtain my wings, and, "in high feather,"  
 Can cleave the air, and laugh at wind and weather.

[Exit CINESIAS ; enter INFORMER.

INFORMER. [Contemptuously.

Ah ! here are patchwork birds without a goot ;  
 Ho, long-winged Swallow ! Ho, Sir Motley-coat !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

This task develops into no slight bore !  
 Some other rascal muttering.

INFORMER.

As before,  
 Ho ! long winged Motley-coat, I ask for you.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

He seems to troll this ditty with the view  
 Of getting a new coat, but he will need  
 "More than one swallow" ere he will succeed.  
 (Witness the proverb, writing *coat* for *summer*.)

INFORMER.

Which gentleman be-feathers each new-comer ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

He stands before you ; say what your desire is.

INFORMER.

Wings, wings, no more ; so make no more inquiries.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Do you then contemplate a *flying visit*  
 To the Pellene cloth-works—or what is it ?

INFORMER.

No, I'm an island-bailiff, and a paid  
 Informer——

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Well, you have a blessèd trade !

INFORMER.

And pettifogger ; so these wings I need,  
That I may run my rounds with greater speed  
And issue summonses.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Will you be made  
By wings a jot more clever at this trade ?

INFORMER.

But I shall dread no buccaneer's attack ;  
And with a flock of Cranes come flying back  
Well ballasted with pending litigation.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But, seriously, is this your occupation ?  
A hale young man, and yet informing go ?

INFORMER.

How can I help it ? I can't dig, you know.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yet there exist employments less like thieving  
Whence such a man as you should earn his living  
More suitably, and honourably far,  
Than *patching up these suits* of legal war.

INFORMER.

Don't lecture me, my reverend sir, but wing me.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

I wing you while I talk.

INFORMER.

How can you bring me  
My wings by prating ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

All mankind by word  
Are rendered *flighty*.

INFORMER.

All?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Have you not heard  
Fathers describing each his hopeful son  
In barbers' shops? "'Tis very odd," cries one,  
"Diitrephes, by *horsy conversation*,  
Has raised my boy on *wings* of expectation  
To drive a trap." Another, with delight,  
Boasts that his son has taken a loftier *flight*  
And *hawks* at tragedy.

INFORMER.

Mere words, say you,  
Produce these feathers?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Certainly I do.  
Through words the soul is lifted up on high  
And the whole man exalted : wherefore I  
Sincerely hope, such useful word-wings giving,  
To turn you to an honest way of living.

INFORMER.

But I won't turn.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Just so. What *will* you do?

INFORMER.

I won't disgrace my family for you.  
My father's father informations laid,  
And I but follow my ancestral trade.

So feather me with pinions swift and light,  
 With wings of Hawk or, if you please, of Kite ;  
 That when I summon strangers to appear,  
 I may return forthwith to cite them here,  
 And then fly back again.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

I comprehend  
 The meaning of your words, my *honest* friend ;  
 The accused cannot arrive in time thus short,  
 So stands convicted of "contempt of court."

INFORMER. [Delighted.

You've hit it !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

So, while *he* makes his appearance  
 By sailing here, *you* fly, and make a clearance  
 Of all his goods !

INFORMER. [Eagerly.

Precisely ! One must pop  
 Hither and thither like a spinning top !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

A *whip*-top ! And to spin it, you require a  
 Nice pair of wings imported from Corcyra.<sup>1</sup>

[Flogs him soundly.

INFORMER.

Oh ! 'Tis a whip.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [Still flogging him.

Wings ! wings ! I cannot stop :  
 With this good pair I spin you like a top !

INFORMER.

Oh, dear ! oh, dear ! have pity on my back !

<sup>1</sup> That is, large two-thonged whips manufactured at Corcyra.



PEISTHETÆRUS.

Oh, prince of scoundrels ! Thou shalt either pack,  
 Or to thy bitter cost *spin* full amends  
 For justice *twisted* to thy wicked ends !

[Exit INFORMER.

Come, let us take the wings and go, my friends.

[*Exeunt* PEISTHETÆRUS and Attendants with  
*baskets of feathers.*

CHORUS.

*The Song of Sycophants and Footpads.*

To many new, wonderful places we've flown,  
 And many remarkable incidents known.  
 Of species outlandish a tree took a start,  
 Kleonymus-tree, with no atom of *heart*.  
 'Tis useful for nothing, as all men may see,  
 But only a *timbersome*, overgrown tree. [reaches,  
 In the spring-tide <sup>1</sup> it bourgeons, and branches out-  
 And ripens a crop of most fraudulent *peaches*.  
 In the winter, while others strew leaves o'er the field,  
 It shrinks like a coward who throws down his shield.  
 We have noted a place in the region of scamps,  
 Under darkness that looms out of reach of the lamps ;  
 Where mortals may venture so long as 'tis light  
 To dine with the heroes.<sup>2</sup> 'Tis unsafe at night.  
 For should any poor wight in the darkness around  
 Encounter Orestes, that *hero* renowned ;  
 He is robbed of his garments, and glad to run in  
 With nothing but hard blows to cover his skin.

<sup>1</sup> The Sycophants, or Informers, flourish in the spring, when the law suits are decided, but in winter fear the vengeance of those whom they have cheated.

<sup>2</sup> By the heroes he means the footpads, of whom *Orestes* was the most infamous.

## PART VIII.

*Enter PROMETHEUS.*

PROMETHEUS.

*[Looking timidly around.*

Oh dear, I trust I am not seen by Zeus.

But where is Peisthetærus?

PEISTHETÆRUS. *[Entering.*

What's this ruse

Of muffling?

PROMETHEUS.

Look, and say if you can see

One of the Gods behind there watching me.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Certainly not. But who are you, sir? Say.

PROMETHEUS. *[Whispering.*

Please to inform me what's the time of day.

PEISTHETÆRUS. *[Impatiently.*

What time? O, early in the afternoon,

But tell me who you are, and that right soon.

PROMETHEUS. *[Cautiously.*

Is it folding-time, or later?

PEISTHETÆRUS. *[Savagely.*

Hateful bore!

PROMETHEUS.

What is Zeus doing? opening his door

Of cloud or shutting it?

PEISTHETÆRUS. *[Frantically.*

Bad luck to you!

PROMETHEUS.

Thus then at length my mufflers I undo.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*Ardently.*

My dear Prometheus !

PROMETHEUS.

[*Timidly.*

Stop, stop, don't exclaim !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But why not ?

PROMETHEUS.

Softly ! Don't pronounce my name,  
 For should Zeus see me here, 'twould seal my fate.  
 But that the secrets of our upper State  
 I may disclose, take now, and having spread,  
 This large umbrella, hold it overhead,  
 So that the Gods can't see me.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Capital !

Skilfully like yourself you plan it all !  
 Come under quickly ! Now speak free from fear.

PROMETHEUS.

Then hear me !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

"Speak, for I am bound to hear."

PROMETHEUS.

It's up with Zeus !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Whence does his ruin date ?

PROMETHEUS.

Since first you founded your aërial State ;  
 For men will now no longer sacrifice  
 To any Gods. No savoury perfumes rise  
 From dainty morsels now this long time past.  
 So we, like votaries of Ceres,<sup>1</sup> fast,

<sup>1</sup> Literally, as on the Thesmophoria, held in honour of Ceres.

Sans sacrifices ! while the Gods barbarian  
 Shriek, in their famine, like a wild *Hungarian*,  
 And threaten an invasion from above,  
 Unless poor Zeus can the blockade remove,  
 And tripe and sausages be forwarded.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Have you, then, Gods barbarian overhead ?

PROMETHEUS.

Barbarian indeed ! for one of these  
 Is tutelary to Exekestides.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

By what name are these Gods barbarian known ?

PROMETHEUS.

Triballians.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Ah, I see the derivation  
 Of the proverbial, "Go to *tribulation*."

PROMETHEUS.

Decidedly. But let me make this clear :  
 Ambassadors will presently be here  
 From these Triballians overhead, and Zeus ;  
 Intending to negotiate a truce.  
 But make no truce except on this condition,  
 That Zeus forthwith restore their royal position  
 And sceptre to the Birds ; then heal all strife  
 By yielding Basileia as your wife.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Who's Basileia ?

PROMETHEUS.

Demoiselle most fair,  
 Who keeps his thunderbolts beneath her care  
 And all his other matters under locks,  
 Good counsel, legislation, and the docks,

“The temperance question,” payment of the jury,  
The treasury, and royal expletives of fury.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

In fact she seems to be sole stewardess  
Of his establishment.

PROMETHEUS.

She is no less :

So if you can induce him to deliver  
This fair princess, your fortune's made for ever.  
I came on purpose to propose this plan,  
For I have always been the friend of man.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

'Thro' you alone we get our victuals hot.

PROMETHEUS.

As for the Gods, you know I *hate the lot*.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Hating the Gods is quite your natural turn.

PROMETHEUS.

A regular Timon ! But I must return ;  
So carry the umbrella as before,  
That if Zeus look, he may suspect no more  
Than that I wait upon a basket-bearer.<sup>1</sup>

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Carry this camp-stool, and so make it clearer.

[*Exeunt ambo.*]

CHORUS.

*Song of the Umbrellas.*

Where the native Africans use their feet  
As a broad protection against the heat ;

<sup>1</sup> At the great festival of Pallas, at Athens, young persons of noble families, accompanied by servants, bore offerings to the Goddess in baskets.

A certain nameless lagoon is outspread  
Where soapless Socrates raises the dead.

Thither Peisander arrived, and he  
Requested Peisander's spirit to see.

For his coward spirit had taken flight,  
And left him a living and *spiritless* wight.

So he brought a lamb of the camel size,  
And severed the throat of the sacrifice.

Then, like Ulysses, a space withdrew ;  
While up to the bleeding victim flew

From subterranean darkness, pat,  
Chærephon—that infernal bat.

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PART IX.

SCENE : *A view of Cloud-Cuckoo city.*

PEISTHETÆRUS, *in the background, is preparing certain  
birds for the spit.*

*Enter* POSEIDON, HERCULES, and TRIBALLUS.

POSEIDON.

Cloud-Cuckoo-city-ramparts here we see,  
The object of our common embassy.

[*To* TRIBALLUS.

What now, good sir ! You are a pretty fright !  
Your cloak upon the left ! Pray set it right.  
You dress yourself like some Laispodias.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Laispodias was an Athenian general, who concealed some deformity in the legs by a long cloak.

Democracy, ah, me ! to what a pass  
Thou bringest us, when deities engage  
This clumsy fellow for an embassy.

TRIBALLUS.

Be quiet, can't yer?

POSEIDON.

Hang you ! Of all that set  
You're the most barbarous God I ever met.  
Come, Hercules, what next ?

HERCULES.

You heard me say  
That my proposal is, without delay,  
To hang the fellow who is not afraid  
To make our godships suffer from blockade.

POSEIDON.

But we were chosen, good sir, you and I,  
As truce-bearers.

HERCULES.

Another reason why  
We ought to hang him !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*Pretending not to see them, to the Attendant.*

Hand me the cheese-grater,  
Bring cheese and spice ; now poke the fire, waiter.

HERCULES. [To PEISTHETÆRUS.

We three—three Gods, the mortal man salute.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [Still ignoring them.

Now, then, proceed to grate the spice to suit.

HERCULES.

[*Curiously.*

What meat is this ?

## THE BIRDS.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Oh, certain birds, you see,  
Rebelled against the Bird-democracy,  
And were found guilty.

HERCULES.

Are you spicing these  
So early?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*Coolly.*

Well, how are you, Hercules?  
Your business here?

HERCULES.

Ambassadors we are,  
Come from the Gods to terminate the war.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

[*To Attendants.*

This cruet has no oil—no, not a whit;  
Yet birds must be well basted on the spit.

HERCULES.

We find ourselves no gainers by these quarrels,  
And you, were we your friends, might fill your barrels  
With good rain-water, and spend halcyon hours.  
In all this we're entrusted with full powers.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

We, in this war, struck not the foremost blow;  
And now (supposing that you wish it so,  
And are, moreover, willing to submit,  
Tho' late, to justice) we will settle it,  
And make a treaty; on this stipulation,  
That Zeus do forthwith sign his abdication  
And hand his sceptre to the Birds. If thus  
A truce be made, I hope you'll dine with us.

HERCULES.

Enough for me! Agreed!



POSEIDON.

What, simpleton !  
 What, glutton ! Rob your father of his throne ?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Indeed ! Will not you Gods be stronger then,  
 Supposing that the Birds reign over men ?  
 Now hidden by the clouds those mortals dare  
 To call the Gods to witness, yet forswear.  
 But when you have the Birds allied to you,  
 If swearing by the Raven and Zeus too,  
 A man swore falsely ; with a secret flight  
 The Raven on his perjured head would light,  
 Peck out an eye, and so impair his sight.

POSEIDON.

Now, by Poseidon, you bespeak us fair !

HERCULES.

And I approve.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

What says your comrade there ?

TRIBALLUS.

Nabaiseatreu !

PEISTHETÆRUS.

You hear ? He's quite content.  
 Now let me show you how by this event  
 We shall confer on you a farther boon.  
 If any man, who vowed that he would soon  
 Bring to some God a victim, does not pay,  
 But quibbling with his conscience, dares to say,  
 " The Gods can wait a bit," withholding still  
 The gift he vowed ; we'll send a little *bill*  
 For him to settle.

POSEIDON.

How ? Explain it, please.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Suppose the fellow sitting at his ease  
 To count his money, or enjoy a wash ;  
 Our Kite forthwith swoops down, and makes a dash  
 At coin or clothes, and carries up to you  
 Instead of one fat sheep the cost of two.

HERCULES.

Once more, say I, tis settled in my mind,  
 This sceptre to the Birds must be resigned.

POSEIDON.

Ask the Triballian ; let him give his vote.

HERCULES.

Triballian, will you please to grunt a note ?

TRIBALLUS. [*Offended.*]

My stick shall warm thy yed !

HERCULES. [*Interpreting.*]

Ay, go ahead.

POSEIDON.

So be it, gentlemen, as you have said.

HERCULES.

Sir, we agree, the sceptre shall be ceded.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Ah, I remember one thing more is needed.  
 Herè I yield to Zeus ; but on his side  
 He must bestow upon me for a bride  
 Fair Basileia.

POSEIDON.

You desire no peace.

Let us go home at once ! [*To the other two.*]

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Just as you please.

Cook, see you make that gravy nice and sweet.

HERCULES. [*Touched by the gravy.*  
Whither, good friend Poseidon, in such heat?  
Shall we about one woman go and fight?

POSEIDON.

What can we do?

HERCULES.

Do! Set the matter right.

POSEIDON.

Why, simpleton, don't you detect the guile  
With which he has cajoled you all this while?  
You're ruining yourself. If Zeus should die,  
Having resigned to these his sovereignty,  
You are a beggar! But if you take care,  
To all he dies possessed of you are heir.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*Interposing.*

Poor fellow! how he's leading you astray  
With sophistry! Just step aside this way,  
And let me whisper in your ear what's true.

[*They retire.*

Oh, your designing uncle's gulling you!  
Of all your father's property no crumb  
To you by any accident could come  
As the law stands. You are a bastard born.

HERCULES.

A bastard! I receive your words with scorn.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Yet that precisely is your case, I vow,  
Your mother being a foreigner: and how,  
Think you, Athenè could be heiress sole,  
She being female, and so off the roll,  
If she had brothers lawfully begotten?

HERCULES.

In this at least your argument is rotten.  
 Cannot my father leave me in his will  
 The bastard's portion?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Law against you still!

Ay, this Poseidon, who can now cajole,  
 Would urge his claim superior to the whole,  
 Alleging he is Zeus's lawful brother,—  
 I quote the law of Solon and no other:—

“If there be children lawfully begotten, the principle  
 of kin doth not apply to children not born in wedlock;  
 but if there be no children born in wedlock, then they  
 shall share the property with the next of kin.”

HERCULES.

To me, then, would accrue nor share nor use  
 Of the estates paternal?

PEISTHETÆRUS.

None, by Zeus!

But tell me now, to test if this be true,  
 Whether your father has yet entered you  
 Among the wardsmen.

HERCULES.

Not in any wise:  
 And this long since occasioned me surprise.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Why then stand gaping like a naughty boy?  
 If you will settle here, you shall enjoy  
 The cream of bird-delights, and be our king.

HERCULES.

Again you seem to me just claims to bring,  
 Therefore to yield the damsel I propose.

PEISTHETÆRUS. [To POSEIDON.  
And you, sir?

POSEIDON.

I shall vote among the "noes."

PEISTHETÆRUS.

The whole thing rests with the Triballian now;  
He has the casting vote. What sayest thou?

TRIBALLUS.

The gradely lass, so beautiful and tender,  
Of yon great King aw to Bird-chap surrender.

HERCULES.

He says "surrender."

POSEIDON.

Nay, if I could follow,

Twas "don't surrender;" if not, like a *Swallow*  
He chatters gibberish.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

Therefore, you see,

He naturally coincides with *me*,  
*Who represent the Swallows.*

POSEIDON.

Well, you two,

Since you agree in this, arrange and do  
Whatever in the bargain must be done.  
I don't consent, and so I'll hold my tongue.

HERCULES. [To PEISTHETÆRUS.

To all your claims we perfectly agree,  
So now ascend to heaven with us three,  
And there receive the kingdom and your Bride.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

How opportunely these carved rebels died  
To grace our nuptials.

## THE BIRDS.

HERCULES.

Shall I mind the roast,  
And tarry here while you three travel post?

POSEIDON.

The roast! Ah, how your carnal tastes appear!  
No; come with us.

HERCULES. [*Reluctantly.*]

I should do better here.

PEISTHETÆRUS.

But ere I go, some of you Birds provide  
A wedding robe befitting such a bride.

[*Exeunt PEISTHETÆRUS and the three Ambassadors.*]

## PART X.

CHORUS.

*The Song of Pleaders and Gluttons.*

Beside the Clepsydra<sup>1</sup> there dwells at Phanæ<sup>2</sup>  
A clique who are wicked as wicked can be.

A clique rendered infamous all men among  
For supplying the belly by using the tongue.

With the tongue in the summer they go out to mow,  
With the tongue in the seed-time a harvest they sow.

With the tongue from the vineyards they suck out the wine,  
With the tongue gather figs<sup>3</sup> when the produce is fine.

<sup>1</sup> The Clepsydra was a water-clock, which marked the time allotted to pleaders in the law courts.

<sup>2</sup> Phanæ was the name of a promontory, used here from its resemblance to the Greek word for *informing*.

<sup>3</sup> Allusion is made to the *sycophants*, or fig-informers, who gave information against the exporters of figs.

They spring from the vilest barbarian masses,  
These pestilent Philips and these Gorgiases.

'Twas from these gormandizers by means of the tongue,  
These Philips—the custom in Attica sprung,

That the tongue of the victim, that member accurst,  
Should be cut out and offered in sacrifice first.

*Enter* MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

O ye who prosper far beyond all words,  
Thrice happy nation of the wingèd Birds,  
Prepare your welcome, for your King is come ;  
Prepare your welcome to his happy home.  
For never star enthroned in golden chair  
Shone out at eve so gorgeously fair,  
And never sun surveying brightest days  
Shot forth afar such aureole of rays  
As his who cometh, leading in procession  
A bride whose beauty beggars all expression !  
And brandishes in his majestic hand  
The wingèd bolt of Zeus, his levin-brand !  
High heaven is full of incense—odours quite  
Beyond one's power to name. O charming sight !  
For breezes blow the curling smoke aside,  
And manifest the Bridegroom and the Bride.  
He comes ! The Muse must sing a sacred song  
In tones auspicious as they pass along.

CHORUS.

[*Dancing.*

Advance, retire, pass through, expand,  
Surround with exultation  
Of voice and wing our fortunate King,  
The King of a fortunate nation.

Hurrah for her youth and its budding charms,  
 Hurrah for her beauty's power !  
 O King, you have taken this Bride to your arms  
 In a most auspicious hour.

Auspicious hour for the Birds, I ween,  
 Auspicious hour for the city !  
 Now welcome the King, now welcome the Queen,  
 With a hymeneal ditty.

With such a ditty the Fates did steep,  
 In music tender and cheery,  
 The monarch of heavenly thrones asleep  
 By the side of Olympian Herè.  
 Hymen ! O Hymenæe !

When Eros, golden wingèd boy,  
 Came car-borne like a Peri,  
 As Paranymp to crown the joy  
 Of Zeus and his fortunate Herè.  
 Hymen ! O Hymenæe !

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*From his chariot.*

I rejoice in your hymns ; in your odes I rejoice !  
 I delight in your greeting ! But now raise your voice,  
 Invoking the thunder's gigantic mirth,  
 And the terrible lightnings that scorch the earth.

CHORUS.

O great and golden lightning blaze !  
 O fiery brand with deathless rays !  
 And thou, O tempest-bearing thunder,  
 Rolling, jarring the earth asunder !  
 Thro' you he shakes the world's foundation,  
 The sovereign lord of all creation.



And the daughter of Zeus reclines at his side,  
The fair Basileia, his beautiful bride.

Hymen, O Hymenæe !

PEISTHETÆRUS. [*Fovially.*

Come to the marriage,  
The banquet waits,  
Feathery flocks  
Of the Birds, my mates !  
Haste, O haste  
To the plain of air,  
And the bridal chamber  
That's garnished there.  
Stretch out thy hand,  
Sweet bride so free,  
And clasp my wings  
To waltz with me.

Thy lovely form I will tenderly bear  
As we float to the music thro' liquid air.

[*Exeunt waltzing.*

CHORUS.

O highest of divinities  
We sing thy triumph-song,  
Victory ! Hurrah ! Hurrah !  
The joyous shout prolong.

THE END.

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